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WALL PAINTINGS
FROM
ANCIENT SHRINES IN CENTRAL ASIA

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WALL PAINTINGS FROM ANCIENT SHRINES IN CENTRAL ASIA

RECOVERED BY
SIR AUREL STEIN, K.C.I.E.

DESCRIBED BY
FRED H. ANDREWS, O.B.E.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE ORDERS
OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

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IN AFFECTIONATE MEMORY OF

AUREL STEIN

GREAT SCHOLAR, EXPLORER AND TRAVELLER
WHOSE CONSTANT AND INSPIRING FRIENDSHIP
I WAS PRIVILEGED TO ENJOY
FOR MORE THAN FIFTY YEARS
THIS WORK, PREPARED IN FULFILMENT OF
HIS LONG CHERISHED WISH,
IS DEDICATED

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FOREWORD

It is by reason of a grievous blow of Fate that the writing of this Foreword has devolved upon me. On 26 October 1943 my life-long friend, Sir Aurel Stein, who would have written it, died a few days after his arrival in Kābul, whither he had gone by consent of His Majesty the Amīr of Afghānistān, full of hope of at last fulfilling his long-cherished wish to carry out archaeological research in and about the ancient city of Balkh.

Sir Aurel Stein had, during several years, repeatedly urged the desirability in the interests of archaeological research, and to satisfy the expectation of those interested in Central Asian archaeology, of publishing this portfolio of reproductions, with explanatory notes, of selected examples from the ancient wall paintings recovered by him. It was his wish that the work should be undertaken by me, and, under the orders of the Government of India, this is now being done. It was understood between Sir Aurel and myself that he would contribute a Foreword dealing with matters relating to the recovery of the paintings, their historical and archaeological importance, and other matters regarding all of which only actual contact with the sites could furnish data leading to fuller elucidation. This he would have done with that scholarly competence and thoroughness characteristic of all his work. From a letter received a few months before he died I understood that he had either drafted or written the Foreword. Whether I rightly interpreted his words and whether it was actually written or only formulated is still in doubt. Unhappy world conditions and lesser circumstances have, so far, hindered the transmission of his papers to this country or the judicious examination of them at their place of deposit in Kashmir.

In the absence of that which would have been so valuable a contribution, it yet seems desirable that some account, although necessarily summary, should be given here of the circumstances which influenced his undertaking the several Central Asian expeditions, of which these paintings form a very small part of the fruit, together with a brief outline of his routes of travel.

It was in June 1900 that Sir Aurel Stein (then Dr. Stein) 'was placed on special duty by the Government of India for the purpose of archaeological explorations . . . in the region of Khotan'. The immediate incentive for this expedition was a communication he had received from Professor Bühler of the finds of birch-bark manuscripts acquired in the vicinity of Khotan, but of which no information was forthcoming as to their exact provenance. Stein felt that personal investigation on

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the spot, interrogating the alleged finders and verifying the exact circumstances and position of the discoveries, was the only way to determine their full archaeological value. How much more he achieved in this strenuous twelve months' tour is recorded in his preliminary report, *Archaeological Exploration in Chinese Turkestan*, and his fuller account entitled *Ancient Khotan*. The route taken on this, his first Central Asian expedition, ran via Gilgit and Hunza into Chinese territory on the Tāgh-dumbāsh Pamīr by way of the Kilik Pass. Here was started his triangular and plane-table survey, which, with astronomical and geological observations, continued throughout his journey. Passing through Tāsh-kurghān, a very ancient outpost of Central Chinese dominions, and Sarīkol, surveying by the way the Mus-tāgh-ata range with a peak of 24,000 feet, he reached Kāshgar on 29 July, where he made preparations for his journey into the desert near Khotan. An enforced delay at Khotan was utilized to survey the hitherto imperfectly mapped portion of the K'un-lun range, by which certain errors in official maps were subsequently corrected. This done, the desert sites explored from Khotan included Dandān-oilik, where very interesting wall paintings and paintings on wood were found, one, with an Aphrodite-like figure, on the wall of a shrine,[1] and another, on wood, of the 'silk princess', both referred to in the Introduction. At Niya, on the site of ancient buildings, he made the momentous discovery of documents dated from the first and second centuries A.D., written on wooden tablets, mostly in the ancient Kharoṣṭhī script, but many in Chinese; a considerable number of the hundreds found bearing their original clay seals with figures of Athene, Eros, and portrait heads, both Indian and Chinese. Endere, Rawak, and other sites were explored, revealing archaeologically valuable material in coins, seals, pottery, textiles, wood-carvings, and other objects. He returned to Khotan in April and came to London via the Trans-Caspian railway, arriving on 2 July 1901.

His next expedition into Central Asia started in 1906. Travelling by way of Swāt and Dīr, the Upper Oxus, over several difficult passes past Kiz-kurghān (the Princess's Tower)—whereof an ancient legend tells of a Chinese princess who, on her way to be married to the King of Persia, being detained here owing to military operations on the road, was visited by a divine person who came riding on horseback from the sun, with romantic consequences—he reached Kāshgar and 'the hospitable roof' of the late Sir George Macartney. From Kāshgar he proceeded to the oasis of Khotan, the base for his expedition. The full record of this great

[1] See plate XXXII.

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undertaking is contained in his *Serindia*, in four volumes, with a fifth containing his 96 maps. Only a few of the many sites examined need be mentioned here.

Before starting for the desert he made a survey up the Nissa valley of the great glaciers that feed the head-waters of the Yurung-kāsh river. This is where, two years later, his right foot became frost-bitten, causing the loss of the toes. Having completed the Nissa valley survey he started for the desert site of Niya, previously explored with such great results in 1901. After further discoveries there he travelled north-east to the oasis of Charkhlik in the region of Lop. Lop (or Lou-lan or Shan-shan) comprised, in Han times, the whole of the depression between the Kuruk-tāgh and Āltin-tāgh with Charkhlik and Mīrān as administrative centres. About fifty miles north-east of Charkhlik at the desolate ancient site of Mīrān, he recovered the wall paintings shown on plates I to III, and photographed others which he found it impracticable to remove at that time. The masses of important manuscripts, and other evidences of Tibetan occupation found in the ruins of an ancient fort nearby, are described in *Serindia* and *Innermost Asia*. From Charkhlik, the next site to be visited was Lou-lan in the Lop desert, where carved architectural woodwork, wooden writing tablets bearing Kharoṣṭhī script, Han coins, and many miscellaneous relics were found among the remains of ruined dwellings. Stone Age and Chalcolithic arrowheads, frequently picked up during the progress across the desert, afforded evidence of the use of the track from remote times. He also identified the line of the ancient Chinese wall, built to protect the trade routes that extended westward from the 'Jade Gate', its great age proved by the finding in one of the towers or block-houses built along the wall Chinese documents on wood bearing dates equivalent to the first century A.D. It is an attractive story, recorded in *Serindia*, but too long to recite here.

The third of Stein's Central Asian expeditions started from Srinagar on 31 July 1913. The route taken was different from those of his former journeys, passing through the recently formed kingdom of Darēl, never before visited by a European, through Yāsīn, and by way of the Darkōt Pass, 15,250 feet, the Tāghdumbāsh Pamīr, the valley of Tāsh-kurghān, and the Kara-tāsh river gorges to Kāshgar. The ever-hospitable house of Sir George Macartney, British Consul-General, again afforded him a welcome base at which to make the necessary preparations for the forthcoming desert journey. A Chinese secretary was engaged and at the end of a fortnight the expedition resumed its progress. Skirting the foot of the T'ien-shan range the Taklamakān desert was entered at its eastern end,

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from Marāl-bāṣhi. After inspecting a few ancient sites an attempt to cross the desert had to be abandoned at the end of several days owing to the exhaustion of the camels. Returning to Khotan a fresh start was made with the Lop desert as goal. The caravan route between the foot of the K'un-lun and the Taklamakān was followed. With periods of halt at certain sites—Niya, Endere, Charchan, Vāsh-shahri, Charkhlik, and Mīrān—all contributing fresh material, the last yielding the painted dado reproduced in plate III, the route led towards the desert sites of Lou-lan, many of which were investigated. In an ancient cemetery the contents of the graves included wonderfully preserved figured silks, dating back to Han times, with designs of weird animals prowling through scrolling clouds.[1] The journey was continued north of Lou-lan and across the salt-encrusted dry bed of the ancient inland sea of Lop to the oasis of Āltmish-bulak. After the very trying time in the desert a much-needed four days' rest was taken and preparations made for a further desert journey in search of the ancient Chinese trade route, 'the Route of the Centre', between Lou-lan and Tun-huang. The references to this route in Chinese records were too vague to afford any real guidance and the desert through which it lay 'had long before the dawn of historical times ceased to offer any possibilities of human occupation', but the 'early Chinese wayfarers peopled those forbidding wastes with "plenty of demons and strange beings" '. On 25 February 1914 the expedition set out. Absorbing incidents of this journey, when in spite of forbidding conditions the route was traced beyond doubt, are fully recorded in *Innermost Asia*. From the severe sufferings of the camels, sympathetically recorded, the endurance of the human members of the caravan can be inferred.

At Tun-huang and even before reaching that oasis, definite traces of the old defensive Chinese wall were found and followed for a long distance, running parallel with the Su-lo-ho river and turning north-east along the course of the Etsin-gol. Nearing the delta of this river, which discharges into a lake, the ruined site of Khara-khoto, lying a short distance to the east, was visited and explored. Many of the ruins had been thoroughly examined by the Russian explorer, Colonel Kozlov, in 1908 and very many manuscripts and other remains were carried by him to Russia. But much remained, and Stein found numbers of extremely interesting drawings and prints on paper, now in the British Museum,

[1] Cf. Andrews: *Ancient Chinese Figured Silks*. Reprinted from the Burlington Magazine, and Stein: *Innermost Asia*, Vol. III, plates XXXII–XLII.

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many pieces of silk, quantities of fallen pieces of stucco decoration, painted and gilded, and the painted fragment reproduced on plate IX.

The next move was to Kan-chou, where an unfortunate riding accident occurred. The Badakhshi stallion Stein was riding became restive, reared, and fell back, crushing Stein's leg and causing extensive muscular lesions which gave him very serious inconvenience and pain for many weeks after. Fortunately, although he was completely incapacitated for walking or riding for some time, no bones were broken.

Turning back from Kan-chou, the route lay north-west through Hāmi and Barkul, then west to Guchen, and south to Turfān, which was reached on 25 October 1914.

Turfān, being of considerable historical importance as the scene of repeated conflicts between the Chinese and the barbarian Huns (or Hsiung-nu), was carefully surveyed and studied, and a very full account of the region is given in *Innermost Asia*. The aspect that has immediate connexion with the present work is the existence of Buddhist shrines and their painted walls. The first of the sites examined was Kara-khōja, where, besides great numbers of miscellaneous objects, many small fragments of painted plaster were gathered, a few of which are shown on plate XI. After returning from a short tour to certain sites north-east of the Turfān depression the next to be examined was Toyuk, 'most picturesque of all Turfān localities'. Among the many cave shrines and temples along the gorge that runs from Toyuk, excavation was started in the debris thrown down from the upper slopes, covering shrines below; and in this, fragments of manuscripts and miscellaneous objects were found. Several shrines on an upper terrace were then investigated with varying results. In one of these was a small room with a vaulted ceiling, boldly painted; reproduced on plate IX. In a rock-cut shrine a considerable part remained of the domed ceiling, beautifully painted. With great skill and patience this was successfully removed in small sections and subsequently reconstructed by me in New Delhi (plate X).

The next site to be examined was that of Bezeklik, where there is a group of cave shrines,[1] previously visited by Professors Grünwedel, who stayed there for two months, and von Lecoq, who removed numbers of the paintings to Berlin. Now Stein, observing the extent of the progressive damage the still-remaining paintings were suffering from local vandalism, decided to remove as many as

[1] See Sketch Plan, plate C.

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possible, to save them from total destruction. The removal was skilfully done by his two assistants Naik Shamsuddīn and Miān Afrāz-gul Khān, who carefully packed the sections in over a hundred large cases, which safely reached New Delhi, where I reassembled, mounted, and set them up in the Central Asian Antiquities Museum. Some of these are reproduced on plates XII to XXXI.

A visit between 18 December and 3 January to Urumchi the provincial capital, mainly on diplomatic business, interrupted survey work. Returning to Murtuk, Turfān, certain ruined structures were examined and a few painted fragments were collected (M.C. IV, plate VIII).

The ancient burial-ground north of the village of Astāna, near Kara-khōja, was the next site to be explored; and here the results were indeed rich in archaeological matter. Although extensive plundering had already gone on for a long time, the silks and various trappings buried with the bodies, still remaining, provided material of intense interest for the archaeologist, historian, artist, and craftsman. They are fully described in *Innermost Asia*.

At this time disquieting information indicated the possibility of official obstruction to further archaeological activities by local Chinese representatives of 'Young China', on the ground of spoliation of China's ancient inheritance. So it was decided to move after ensuring the dispatch of the 145 cases of antiquities. Leaving the region of Turfān on 16 February 1915, the journey back to Kāshgar was by way of Singer, Ying-p'an, and along the glacis of the Kuruk-tāgh to Korla. From here to Kāshgar Stein travelled 938 miles in 55 days, along the foot of the T'ien-shan range to Kuchā, through Ak-su and Marāl-bāshi, arriving at Kāshgar on 31 May.

At Kāshgar, 'my familiar base', the collection of antiques was repacked—a long and tedious business—for their 'long and difficult journey across the Kara-koram to Ladāk and thence to Kashmir'.

This done, Stein now made arrangements for his long-projected journey over the Pamīrs—the 'Roof of the World'—towards the Trans-Caspian railway, north-eastern Persia, and Sīstān, 'by the route which the ancient silk trade may be assumed to have followed'. Permission to pass through Russian territory had been obtained from the Russian Government by the Foreign Department of the Indian Government.

As this fresh expedition, fully reported in *Innermost Asia*, did not furnish any of the paintings reproduced in this work it is not proposed to record its progress here.

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A few extremely interesting paintings were recovered from Sīstān, which are now set up in the Central Asian Antiquities Museum in New Delhi, but their condition is so bad that successful reproduction was not possible. Stein recalls that according to Zoroastrian belief it is from the lake in Sīstān that the victorious saviour is to arise to vanquish Ahriman, the spirit of evil, and to set the world free.

The many other journeys of exploration and research made by Sir Aurel Stein, in addition to the three into Central Asia, are not referred to in the above brief review as they have no direct bearing upon the subject of the present work. There were many shorter tours, each with a definite object, such as that into Swāt with Sir Bindon Blood's Expeditionary Force in 1898.[1] Explorations in 1911–12 on the North-west Frontier and in 1925 when he followed the tracks of Alexander the Great to Aornos.[2] In the years 1927–36 he travelled in Wazīristān, Balūchistān, Makran, and Īrān,[3] tracing the evidence of prehistoric and later civilization in those lands. In 1938–9 he explored in 'Iraq and traced the old Roman *limes* in Trans-Jordan. In 1940–1 the dried-up course of the 'lost river' Sarasvati was surveyed.[4]

The immense quantity of archaeological material excavated by him from the enshrouding soil and debris of ages has helped to enrich the ethnographic and artistic departments of many museums in India, Persia, the continent of Europe, England, and America, and has provided material for study for students engaged in many branches of research. If are added to all this his extensive surveys and accurate mapping of great tracts of territory formally either imperfectly or entirely unsurveyed, his hydrographic, linguistic, and anthropological observations systematically carried on and recorded throughout his journeys, his great output of published records, and his continuous and voluminous correspondence, we have a sum of labours accomplished which for versatility, scholarly recording, and actual quantity seems incredible as the life's work of one man.

The scheme for this work was, as I have intimated, formulated long ago, and although submitted to the High Commissioner for India in 1930, it was after ten years of consideration that sanction for its publication was given. During the interval between 1930 and 1940 inevitable changes occurred in the personnel of the offices and departments before which the matter was periodically brought under

[1] Stein: *Detailed Report of an Archaeological Tour with the Buner Field Force.* Lahore, 1898.

[2] ibid., *On Alexander's Track to the Indus.* Macmillan, 1929.

[3] ibid., *An Archaeological Tour in the Ancient Persis. Iraq,* vol. III, no. 2.

[4] ibid., *Geographical Journal,* vol. XCIX, no. 4, April, 1942.

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review, so that immediate official interest in the matter passed from one to another. To those from whom help and advice have been received and who have thereby contributed to the production of this work, my sincere thanks are due. My first and most profound expression of gratitude must be for the constant help and encouragement received from the late Sir Aurel Stein. While in New Delhi, where I was engaged upon reassembling and mounting the wall paintings, he and I agreed upon the form which the portfolio should take. The long delay between the submission of the project and the final official sanction for printing was attributable to unavoidable causes. It is an abiding regret with me that he was not to see the consummation of our plans and that by his passing I have been deprived of his wise council in the production.

Grateful recognition is due to the Marquis of Zetland, to Sir Samuel Hoare, and Sir Cecil Kisch for their active support and to Sir Atul Chatterjee whose untiring and continued interest has contributed greatly towards a successful issue. Successive Directors-General of Archaeology in India—Sir John Marshall, Mr. H. Hargreaves, Mr. J. F. Blakiston, and Rai Bahadur K. N. Dikshit—have been consistently helpful, and to Dr. Mortimer Wheeler, the present Director-General, who arranged for and personally supervised the checking of colour proofs in New Delhi, we are largely indebted for such accuracy as has been achieved.

The production was ultimately undertaken by the Oxford University Press, and to Dr. John Johnson, C.B.E., the then Printer to the University and archaeologist, I tender my grateful thanks for his valuable advice and friendly interest in the many practical details involved. All but the colour plates is the work of the august Press which he directed. The fine reproduction in monotone of subjects which, without their colour, it was so difficult to render effectively, is due to his discrimination and patient experiment towards obtaining the best results possible in collotype. Since his retirement in the autumn of 1946 his successor in the important position of Printer to the University, Mr. Charles Batey, O.B.E., has continued to advance this work nearer to successful completion and issue. For his valuable help I tender sincere thanks.

The colour plates are by Messrs. Henry Stone & Son of Banbury, who, under the direction of Mr. John A. Milne, C.B.E., have produced so many reproductions for Sir Aurel Stein's books. In the present case there was the great disadvantage of the work having to be done in the absence of the originals. The colour blocks were made in Banbury, while the paintings were in New Delhi. Accuracy

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depended not only upon the quality of the colour negatives made in India but upon the experience and skill of the block-maker in Banbury, helped by a set of Kodachrome pictures—in securing which Mr. H. L. Cattermole, of the Kodak Management in London, took an active interest—upon my memory of the colours, and on the detailed descriptions in my official catalogue of the paintings.[1] Carrying the work as far as possible under these conditions, proofs were sent to New Delhi, where they were finally compared and checked with the originals by Pandit Jagarnath Mattu, under Dr. Wheeler's supervision, as mentioned above. The number of proofs submitted for my correction before they were considered advanced enough for comparison with the originals in India, although many, were provided without a word of protest from Mr. Milne whose generosity in this was prompted by his desire, equally with mine and Dr. Johnson's, to arrive at the best possible results. Repeated corrections and suggestions made by me to Mr. Bellingham, head of Messrs. Stone & Son's engraving department, the artist who actually made the colour blocks, were always taken not merely patiently but with eagerness, as steps towards truth of reproduction. The sets of colour negatives were made under my direction in 1925–6, while I was still in New Delhi, by Mr. Vasey, an expert recommended by Messrs. Stone & Son for this essential part of the work.

My friend of many years, Mr. F. J. Adams, C.I.E., until recently Secretary of the General Department of India House, was officially concerned with the scheme and has long since earned my gratitude for the wisdom and readiness of his counsel on many points relating thereto. I have also to thank Mr. W. B. England, M.B.E., for his help since taking over the files relating to this publication. To Miss K. W. Thorne of the India House Library I have never applied in vain for information available in such books as that Library contains.

To Mr. C. E. A. W. Oldham, C.S.I., an old friend of both Stein and myself, and for many years Editor of *The Indian Antiquary*, I owe a special debt of thanks for his kindness in reading my text and for his criticism, corrections, and suggestions, which from his wide knowledge of Indian culture, languages, and geography are especially valuable. Such errors as may have escaped his critical eye are mine.

It is not improbable that I have omitted to acknowledge indebtedness to others who during the extended period of waiting and preparation have had part in promoting the production of the work. To such I tender my thanks and apologies, and desire that they will accept these in partial acquittance.

[1] *Catalogue of Wall Paintings from Ancient Shrines in Central Asia and Sistan.* Delhi, 1933.

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INTRODUCTION

THE practice of decorating the interiors of shrines by painting is of great antiquity, reaching back perhaps to prehistoric ages, when cave-dwellers drew on their walls subjects of, to us, unknown significance. The paintings in Crete, in the tomb chambers of Egypt and Etruria, in Pompeii, in the temples of Dura-Europos, and in numberless other places in the Middle East and the Orient carry on the tradition with a continuity persisting down to the present time.

With progress in the study of archaeology we come to realize that the tracing of origins is but seeking the source of the infinite. Evidence accumulates to show that intercourse between peoples in past ages was earlier and greater than was formerly realized. No natural barriers, whether on land or sea, seem to have been great or awful enough to prevent contact of different communities and the resultant exchange of ideas. And nowhere has there been more complex fusion than in north-west India and Central Asia: and it still develops. It is usual to attribute to Greek inspiration much that they themselves acquired from outside, moulded to their exquisite taste and judgement, and passed on. That art, as developed in Greece and modified in Persia and Rome, had certain, even considerable, influence on the art of Buddhist India and particularly in the regions lying to the north, there is clear evidence. But there was also native genius, skilful to adapt these influences with discrimination and often with keen artistic sense, as shown by examples of sculpture and architecture.

How early and whence the practice of wall painting reached India, Tibet, Central Asia, and China, or whether these lands originated their own art, there is not sufficient historical evidence to determine. Existing fragments still adhering in patches on the walls, or fallen and scattered in the accumulated dust and plaster on the floor of ruined shrines, attest by the facile technique a long period of development of the craft and its practice by hands used to the work and familiar with the procedure, but showing varying degrees of skill in drawing. The many examples still surviving of early painting in both caves and free-standing shrines are evidence, too, that the decorator's industry must have been extensive and, by the quantity of work of indifferent quality, that many prentice hands were employed. Occasional traces of an earlier painting underneath the later one, the earlier work being generally superior in all respects to that which covered it, is further evidence of previous prolonged evolution of the art.

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Of paintings in built structures very few of an early period have escaped the destructive influences to which they were exposed. Within caves, owing to the greater protection afforded, deterioration due to forces of nature has been slower, although human activities have left their malefic trail. The adoption for religious purposes of natural caves, and of those excavated in suitable cliff faces, had many obvious advantages, not the least being a measure of security from aggression, a consideration of some importance in a land subject to tribal disturbances, especially in the north and in that much-harried territory comprising the Tārīm basin and the main roads connecting China with India and the West.

With the expansion of Buddhism and the erection of increasing numbers of stūpas and shrines, sculptors and painters were in constant demand for work on the enrichment of these sacred structures. Inexhaustible subject-matter was provided in Buddhist legends—the *Jātakas*—and when elements from the richly complex Hindu mythology were later imported into the relatively simple creed of early Buddhism the scope for the artist was immensely extended. Approved designs, originally drawn by competent artists, were used repeatedly, and in repetition, often by indifferently trained artisans, suffered deterioration.

In the territory north of the K'un-lun range the roads or tracks that served the traffic, both civilian and military, between China, India, and the West were favourable routes along which to establish shrines. Besides the flow of usual caravan traffic, pilgrims on their way to visit famous Buddhist sites would pass along these roads and would naturally pause to pay devotion at such shrines as lay on, or sufficiently near, their way, thereby accumulating spiritual merit for themselves and contributing towards the maintenance of the shrines. The donations of these wayfarers would provide means to pay for the services of roving painters, who doubtless frequented the neighbourhood of shrines for chance employment either by the priests or by prospective donors anxious to acquire merit; and to assure that such claims should be rightly credited, it was not unusual for the donor, by arrangement with the painter, to be represented in the picture in a suitably devout pose and drawn to a becoming scale. The occasional traces of earlier work under the later painting, already referred to, seem to be of a superior quality, but are too scanty and fragmentary to admit of conclusive judgement on this point or to identify the subject. Besides finer craftsmanship there appeared to have been a more generous use of gold-leaf than in the later work. The reason for effacement can be only surmised. It may be that they were in bad condition, or that they were

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of the Hīnayāna school and were replaced by a more modern composition appropriate to the superior claims of the Mahāyāna development, or, again, to make room for a picture to gratify a generous donor. This is pure supposition. The useful deduction is that these palimpsests help to support the assumption of a considerable period of development of the art.

The paintings represented by the accompanying reproductions are selections from those recovered by Sir Aurel Stein during his several expeditions into Chinese Turkestān in the years 1900–16. They may be conveniently grouped geographically under two heads; those from sites to the south of the great Taklamakān Desert and those from the north. Within the first of these groups are sites lying along the old Silk Route between China and the West, Farhād-Bēg-yailaki, Balawaste, Khādalik, and Mīrān. The sites on the 'Route of the North' are Karakhōja, Toyuk, and Bezeklik, all in the Turfān district.[1] Chronologically the paintings extend over a period of several centuries. Period, locality, racial complexities, theological and ritualistic divergencies have impressed their varied influences on subject, mode of expression, and craftsmanship.

Well-defined styles mark respectively predominant Indian and Chinese inspiration. Others combine in varying degree the influences of both. South of the desert where Indian qualities predominate Persian influence intrudes. In the north, Chinese characteristics are modified by Tibetan, Uigur, and perhaps others. The factor common to all the compositions, although variously expressed, is the Buddhist legend; but the rich possibilities offered by Hindu and Tantric importations stimulated the imagination of Chinese and Tibetan artists, who were probably more concerned with the stronger attraction of the decorative possibilities than with the spiritual sense which inspired the earlier Indian renderings. While all are linked together by the common bond of one basic religion the manner of expression differs widely. Examination of the great mass of mural paintings brought to light by Grünwedel, von Lecoq, Stein, Pelliot, and other archaeologists in the course of their investigations of the many Buddhist shrines surviving in Chinese Turkestān reveals a bewildering diversity of style and treatment. This is not surprising having regard to the complex social and political conditions prevailing in that region during the period covered by the existing examples of painting—roughly, seven centuries—and even long before. The dominant power had passed from one to another of races differing in ideals and

[1] See Sketch Map, plate D.

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traditions in Art and varying in psychological conceptions. Such fluctuations of fortune brought the Great Yüeh-chih to drive out the Śakas in 150 B.C., and these were themselves displaced by the Chinese of the Former Han dynasty, who ruled for a time, were driven out, but resumed control in the Later Han period after the victory of the Chinese General Pan Ch'ao over the Khotan ruler in A.D. 70. When troubles at home, in China, necessitated their withdrawal the Ephthalites or White Huns came into power, only, in their turn, to be ousted by the Western Turks. But with the T'ang dynasty, the Chinese, in A.D. 618, again took firm hold. In A.D. 640 the Chinese army occupied Turfān, and later had the support of the Uigurs against the Turks. The Tibetans, ever formidable rivals, attacked Khotan in A.D. 665 and in 670 severely defeated the Chinese and took possession of the territory, which they held until defeated by the Chinese General Wang Hsiao-chieh in 692. Later the Arabs became troublesome in the west, and the Tibetans again in the south. They were, however, checked until a Chinese general treacherously killed the ruler of the tributary kingdom of Tashkend, when the infuriated son of the murdered man stirred up revolt and attacked the Chinese, inflicting on them a crushing defeat from which their authority never recovered. Ultimately the Tibetans gained possession of the whole Tārīm Basin, which they held until driven out by the Uigurs about the end of the ninth century A.D. About the middle of the following century Islam is said to have been established throughout Eastern Turkestān by Satok Boghra Khān.

This very imperfect and summary review is sufficient to indicate some of the probable reasons for the diversities referred to in design and treatment of the paintings. Yet, although there are definite differences, there is also repetition of certain identical mannerisms and even the use of the same compositions in districts far apart from one another, suggesting the itinerant nature of the painter's life, moving along the trade routes, equipped with drawings and tracings of popular compositions, and exchanging ideas and tracings with brother craftsmen met by the way.

The occurrence in the late medieval art of Europe of motives and forms found in Buddhist paintings in Central Asia presents a field of research of considerable interest, but it lies beyond the scope of the present work.

Of the examples to be here considered the earliest are those from Mīrān (plates I to III) and the latest, those from Bezeklik (plates XII to XXXI). The Mīrān paintings come from the interior walls of the Buddhist shrines M. III and

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M.V. Both were built structures, in a very ruinous condition; their exact form in elevation could not be determined, but enough remained to show that they were square on external plan and that they each contained a circular cella enclosing a stūpa with circular base, the space between stūpa and cella walls providing a circumambulatory passage. It was from these cella walls that some of the examples were recovered. In the case of M.V, there was another passage or corridor running round the outer, square walls, also painted and probably enclosed by protecting walls outside these again, which, however, had completely disappeared. The excellent preservation of many of the fragments is due to their protection, after falling, by the masses of debris that choked the corridor, and in which they were embedded. This accumulation of fallen plaster and masonry also protected portions of the dados, two or three feet high, which occupied the lower part of the walls, and remained in position. Above the dados the walls had been originally painted with subjects from Buddhist legends, but most of this had fallen.

Apart from their artistic and technical interest the Mīrān paintings have a special archaeological value. From evidence afforded by certain Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions recovered from the debris the probable date of the shrines is about the third or fourth century A.D. While we are familiar with the Buddhist sculptures of Gandhāra from the numberless fragments in many public museums and private collections, the only examples of the same art expressed in painting, at present known, are these from Mīrān. The subject-matter of the pictures, seen and photographed *in situ* by Sir Aurel Stein, has been described by him in *Serindia* and need not be repeated here. A few points noted during the present writer's intimate association with, and close study of, them may be mentioned. The motive of the festooned garland carried on the shoulders of *amorini* is constantly used in Gandhāra sculpture, as are also the winged angel busts placed in the upper hollows of the festoon; but in the dado of M. V it is rendered in a far more interesting way than in any of the sculptured versions. Here the characterization of the alternate male and female heads is very striking, and among the *amorini* there is a definite and successful attempt to express individuality. The homely touch of the foot-weary boy is delightful, and his appearance on the Kaniṣka casket, now in the Peshawar Museum, and again in a sculptured fragment of a step 'riser' from Gandhāra, in the British Museum, is significant. See Figs. 1 and 2, p. 13.

In Sir Aurel Stein's description of the fine painting illustrating the *Vessantara*

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Jātaka, on the upper part of the wall in the same shrine, not removed by him and, alas, subsequently destroyed by the clumsy operations of a Japanese 'archaeologist', he refers to an appearance of continuity of the several incidents in the picture, which in Gandhāra sculpture would have been divided by an architectural feature such as a pilaster; but in the painting no such dividing feature appears, nor would this have been appropriate. But on subsequent study of the photographs and in an endeavour to join them in their proper sequence, it seemed to me that the incidents had been separated from each other by trees. This, in the painted version, would be a suitable and artistic way of marking the division while giving a pleasing effect of continuity. Such a device, I have since found, does actually occur, although rarely and less happily, in Gandhāra sculpture, where a series of niches or compartments are formed by the trunks and arching branches of trees. In support of the assumption of the early date of the Mīrān paintings and their relation to Gandhāra sculpture, a few further points may be noted. In sculptures and paintings alike the figures are, with few exceptions, barefooted, and do not stand on *padmāsanas*. The costumes are simple and without jewellery. The nimbus is used only with the head of the Buddha, and then as an unornamented simple disk, there being no *vesica piscis*.

Speculations as to the 'origin' of the typical figure of the Buddha are many. In the fragment from Mīrān, M. III. 003, plate I, there is nothing exotic about him. He is just an ordinary man in the act of teaching, such as any painter might draw from observation of any contemporary preacher. He is distinguished only by his plain nimbus and the colour of his robe. The same simple quality pertains to all the persons in the Mīrān paintings.

There is considerable internal evidence in these paintings in favour of the probability that they are Indian in conception and execution. The men are of Indian type, some with generous moustache and beard; their garments are Indian; they have bare feet, and their hands are those of Indians. In the destroyed painting of the *Vessantara Jātaka* referred to above, the elephant shows the accuracy of form and truth of action that the Indian artist alone can so faithfully render. The girls, although suggestive of the Persian type of beauty, may well be Indian, perhaps influenced by contact with Persian fashion. Further, the inscriptions occurring in the paintings being in Kharoṣṭhī, an ancient script used in India, and the legend of the presence of an Indian colony in Khotan in Aśoka's time, help to strengthen the probability that Indian artists, familiar with Buddhist lore, may have found

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employment for their skill along the Silk Route running between Khotan and China on which Mīrān stood. The partial shaving of the heads of the garland-carrying boys is almost certainly Indian and has spiritual significance of ancient sanction. Although trading connexions with China by this route must have been considerable there is nothing in the Mīrān paintings definitely indicative of borrowings from Chinese art.

The technique of the Mīrān painting, all *in tempera*, follows well-developed methods. Assuming that the design is first drawn on paper it is transferred to the whitened wall-surface either by pouncing through the pricked drawing or by other means familiar to craftsmen. The transferred outlines are then lightly traced over with a pale colour to fix them. The masses of colour are next laid in with the brush, shading tints are added to suggest chiaroscuro, and the contours are strengthened with soft brush lines of red or dark grey which blend to some extent with the colour masses, giving softness and roundness to the edges. Finally touches of black or red are added for emphasis where most effective, and white for high lights and the white of the eyes. The sharp hard line of the later paintings, such as those of Turfān, is never used in the Mīrān work. The colours are few and mainly those readily obtainable from mineral sources, from lamp black and indigo, and possibly occasionally other vegetable origins. The shading tint on flesh is either a warm umber or a delicate pearly grey, and is disposed in accordance with a fixed conventional system.

Considerable changes in conception and treatment mark the painting of a later period, represented by the examples on sites farther west, in the direction of Khotan—Khādalik, Farhād-Bēg-yailaki, and Balawaste. The doctrine of the 'Lesser Vehicle' followed in Kāshgar, as recorded by Hsüan-tsang in the seventh century, was less favoured in neighbouring districts. There are no garland-bearing *putti*, and winged figures no longer appear. The *padmāsana* now invariably supports the Buddha and in similar function is extended to most of the celestial figures. Costumes are elaborated and, excepting that of the Buddha, are often represented as made of richly figured stuffs with patterns sometimes suggestive of Western derivation. The vesica appears, generally, in highly decorative form, and the nimbus has lost its simplicity, being patterned in keeping with the vesica. The essentially human quality, the easy grace and almost domestic note, that distinguishes personages of the Mīrān paintings, gives place to figures of complaisant, inscrutable visage, posing dramatically in accordance with canonical prescript, and

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conveying the impression of being consciously of the elect and extra-mundane, but sometimes degenerating, particularly in some northern pictures, into globose-headed creatures with inadequate features. And yet, probably through Chinese influence, there is among these occasional evidence of keen observation, and a capacity to depict accurately anatomical variations and expressions of strong emotion.

But in the paintings of Balawaste, Farhād-Bēg-yailaki, and Khādalik in the Domoko region, about 500 miles west of Mīrān, and probably 300 years later in date, there is still to be found a certain breadth and freedom of treatment and a softness of contours in a few examples, as for instance in the fragments F.XII.007 and 008 (plate v). In the picture of the goddess Hāritī, however, from the same shrine (plate iv), the contour lines are hard. The same quality of line marks the examples from Khādalik and Balawaste in plates v and vi, and there is noticeable extensive infiltration of Sasanian motives in ornamental details.

In the richly patterned garments can be recognized figured silks such as might have come from looms of the Middle East, or more probably from those of Khotan where the long-established silk industry flourished in the early part of the seventh century, as recorded by Hsüan-tsang, who tells the romantic local legend of the introduction into that kingdom of cocoons concealed in the coiffure of a Chinese princess, in defiance of the law which prohibited their export from China, when she went to Khotan as bride of the local king. An extremely interesting confirmation of the existence of this story is contained in the seventh-century painting on a wooden panel discovered by Sir Aurel Stein at the desert site of Dandān-oilik, about a hundred miles north-east of Khotan.[1]

The disk-like face of Hāritī (plate iv) is typical of a style found in cave paintings in the north. The love-locks curling on to the cheeks are more attractively rendered in the 'silk princess' of the Dandān-oilik panel, and, much earlier, in the lady of the Mīrān dado (plate iii). The almost diagrammatic Buddha reproduced in plate vii is perhaps a somewhat extreme example of concession to a desire for display of symbolism. The face, like that of Hāritī, is a mere disk, the nose badly drawn, and the mouth feeble. In both Hāritī and the Buddha the upper eyelids are heavy and drooping, perhaps intended to express intense introspective absorption or spiritual ecstacy. But this heaviness of eyelid is common to most of the faces in the Khotan group of paintings, in striking contrast with the frank, wide-open eyes

[1] Stein: *Ancient Khotan*, D.X. 4, plate LXIII.

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of Mīrān. Exaggerated elongation of the ear lobes, rent with great slits or gaping holes, is now the rule. The worshipping figure (Har. B.), reproduced on the title-page, has these heavy-lidded eyes and elongated ears, and from behind the shoulders rise either very stylized wings, a belated and transformed survival from an earlier period, or it may be that they represent flames. While charming in many ways, it is full of faults in drawing. In some of these paintings haloes are composed of bands of plain colour, often with little flickering touches of white, like tiny flames, at their edges; and the number of colours used is greater than formerly, and of more sombre and complex hue.

Turning now to the Turfān region, 600 miles to the north-east of Khotan (north of the Taklamakān desert and at the foot of the Kuruk-tāgh), greater complexity of styles is found. The geographical position of Turfān has always rendered it especially subject to the varied political and ethnic fluctuations already referred to. Lying on the trade route, the 'New Route of the North', opened in the first century A.D., carrying traffic between China and the West, it could be, and was, invaded from the north of the T'ien-shan range by way of several relatively easy passes. It was here that repeated clashes occurred between Huns and Chinese from the time of the Han dynasties onwards. Western Turks, Uigurs, and Tibetans, invading from different directions, exercised, in turn, periods of supremacy. But the strongest influence seems to have been that of the Chinese, whose firm hold on the region in T'ang times had a lasting and civilizing effect. A significant fragment of painting from the wall of one of the Bezeklik cave shrines (Bez. xi. A–C, plate xx) depicts a crowd of mourners gathered round the bier of the Buddha, composed of representatives of the many kingdoms present on that mournful occasion, and affords an interesting opportunity of identifying the several types of communities usually at variance, but here united in expressing a common grief.

The Turfān region, rich in remains of Buddhist and Muhammadan shrines, has been explored and closely studied by several eminent scholars, Russian, German, British, and French. Dr. Klementz, acting under the auspices of the Russian Academy of Sciences in 1897, reported on the ruins. In 1902 and 1907 Professors Grünwedel and von Lecoq carried out most thorough investigations, and the results of their labours are recorded in several beautiful and impressive volumes. Large sections of the paintings were removed from the walls of the shrines and transferred to the Ethnographic Museum in Berlin, where, according to reports,

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much was deposited in the vaults of that building to lie neglected and rotting, a prey to insects and rodents. In 1910 and 1911 Mr. Tachibani, the Japanese traveller, visited the sites.

Sir Aurel Stein's explorations in the Turfān depression at the end of 1914 were mainly geographical and historical, but also very fruitful in archaeological material. The rich results of his labours, especially at Toyuk and Astāna, have been recorded in his great Report, *Innermost Asia*, wherein he deals exhaustively with the geography and history of the region. His discoveries in the ancient graves at Astāna reveal the strength of Chinese culture there, and have been fully described in the Report. In the course of his investigations he examined cave and structural shrines at Kara-khōja, Toyuk, Bezeklik, and other sites, and removed from them a considerable amount of the painted plaster, which he cut from the walls in small sections. These sections were carefully packed and sent to India, where they were reassembled, mounted on aluminium backing, and arranged by me in the Central Asian Antiquities Museum at New Delhi.[1] During reassembling, selected examples were photographed for colour and monotone reproduction in anticipation of their publication in the present work. With few exceptions the paintings are Buddhist of the Mahāyāna canon with some Tantric intrusions. Manichaean texts found in the debris of ruins testify to the presence of followers of Mani, and a few of the painted fragments from the walls of one shrine may relate to that sect.

At Kara-khōja or Idikut-shahri (the 'town of the Idikut or Uigur rulers') the ruins are of free-standing structures. In one of these, besides a fragment of a Manichaean manuscript, some Chinese coins, current during the T'ang dynasty, were found. In a small cave shrine at Toyuk the domed ceiling was elaborately painted with floral scrolls supporting a series of seated figures emblematic, it is believed, of the Moon deity with attendants (plate x). Although in a ruinous state, enough remained to show the general scheme. This dome, reconstructed, is now in the museum at New Delhi. In the many small fragments of painted plaster collected, a few of which are reproduced in plate VIII, the importance of clear contour lines is probably indicative of Chinese influence. But the elements of design, derived from the flotsam deposited by the various invading waves, and the manner of treatment are so combined that, except in a few cases, there is no dominant racial distinction.

Reviewing the paintings of the Turfān shrines generally, most of which cover a

[1] See my *Catalogue of Wall Paintings*. Delhi, 1933.

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period of about 300 years, there are certain mannerisms in physiognomy, pose, and costume of the figures that invite critical consideration. To mention a few, there is the disk-like face with inadequate features, badly drawn in a thin expressionless line. With this goes the globose head with usually close-cropped hair, long, thin, narrow-waisted body, and thin limbs. A typical but badly preserved example is Kao. II. 02 in plate XI. At Bezeklik, coiffure and head-dress are varied and significant. Hands are distinguished by several characteristics; those of the Mīrān figures, south of the Taklamakān, a few centuries earlier than the paintings of the north, are strong, with thumbs well separated from the fingers—capable-looking Indian hands. In Turfān, however, the hands are slim, delicate, and graceful, and have the thumbs either closed up to the fingers or strongly abducted; and in the latter case, when the hands are folded in the attitude of prayer or supplication, the thumbs are sharply erect, as in Har. B on the title-page. The emphasis on the abducted position of the thumb is a noticeable feature in late medieval art in Europe, as, for example, in the mosaics of S. Apollinare at Ravenna and in the Anglo-Saxon *Book of Life* at Hyde Abbey, Winchester, and other miniatures of the same period. In Turfān, under Chinese influence, the fingernails are long; otherwise they are trimmed very short. Feet are almost always badly drawn and, if not bare, shod with sandals or shoes of more or less elaborate fashion. In Bezeklik paintings the Buddha always wears sandals. Costumes are either the loose draperies customary in India, and by their nature often closely resembling those of classic Greece and Rome, or elaborately 'tailored' garments conforming to fashions of the intruding communities. Rich materials figured with Sasanian and Chinese patterns occur. Decorative Chinese lacquered leather armour and much elaborate millinery adorn some of the donors and celestial attendants.

Completely nude figures are very seldom represented, and then mostly infantile, such as are found associated with the goddess Hāritī (plate IV) or the boys disporting in the water (Bez. v, flooring, plate XXII). Two examples of the nude female figure are that of the tortured woman (Kao. III. 021, plate XI) (and even she is furnished with an exiguous concession to decorum) and the Aphrodite-like figure standing in a tank, found in a wall-painting at Dandān-oilik (reproduced in plate XXXII), and here also, doubtless in deference to ecclesiastical scruples, an ineffectual grape-leaf serves as a token of propriety.

The standing Buddha figures in the Bezeklik paintings are very badly proportioned, being too short, a fault common, although not general, in Gandhāra sculp-

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tures. This is probably accidental coincidence, without canonical significance. Such disproportion is not usual in Chinese art, and perhaps indicates that despite the strong Mongolian quality present in most of the Bezeklik paintings they are, with few exceptions, not the work of Chinese painters. Taking into account the known practice of using the same cartoons repeatedly, shortening of the figure could be explained, although not quite satisfactorily, by employment of the summary method of adapting an existing cartoon to a space of insufficient vertical measurement, by cutting out a central part—a kind of telescopic reduction—an operation not unknown to the artisan decorator of our own time.

In the badly damaged painting Bez. x. K–O, reproduced in plate XXIV, and an enlarged portion in plate XXV, there is more Chinese quality of drawing, combined perhaps with something of Tibetan inspiration. This picture is described as fully as its condition permits in the section dealing with the plates.

Comparing the paintings here reviewed with those of early cave shrines in southern and central India, such as Ajanta and Bāgh, there are many differences, partly ethnographic and geographical. There are sharp distinctions between the racial types of the two regions, and their social habits. In the south, where climate dictates a minimum of clothing, the paintings express enjoyment in depicting the human form, with emphatic insistence upon sex distinction in figure and pose. The architectural setting of open pavilions permits our visual participation in the intimate felicities of domestic life, and we are invited to witness fine pageants and festivals in delightful gardens where peacocks perch on stylistic rockeries, monkeys sport, and happy, fat little *kinnaras* make music in the air. There is, in short, a sensation of joy in life accentuated by occasional reminders of sad incidents.

In the north it is otherwise. Elaborate garments conceal the often ill-proportioned bodies; and sex is, in many instances, indeterminate. Of ordinary human happiness and relaxation there is no indication. Almost every personage is superhuman and those who are human are paying homage to the others. Every scheme is hieratic, and each figure, excepting the few puny earthlings, is furnished with a halo, advising us that we look upon a being of a superior order. No relief from the devotional tension is offered or permitted. Tantric figures, in fancy dress, flourish implements of painful import in their multiple, threatening hands, and repulsive imps of the nether regions rush madly about, bent on mischief. In the narrative picture, Bez. xiv. B–D, plate XXXI, a kind of predella, Chinese influence is evident, and the presence here of real human beings, engaged in familiar mundane

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occupations, is in pleasant contrast with the sublime air of the celestial host above it.

The rhythmic sensitiveness in composition and drawing instinct in the southern Indian paintings contrasts fundamentally with the rigid ordinance governing many of the Bezeklik schemes. Whereas the southern pictures bear the impress of the hand and inspiration of the artist, those of the north mostly show the mechanical habitude of the artisan. In the southern paintings there is a subtle quality of depth and atmosphere, lacking in those of the north. Such qualities reflect psychological differences—the imaginative, poetical nature of the one as against the matter-of-fact and practical outlook of the other. These generalizations, in so far as they relate to the northern pictures, refer only to examples reproduced in this work, and even among these there are exceptions, but they are rare. A few points of comparison in certain details are interesting. The powdering of a deep red background with little white flowers, frequently found at Ajanta, occurs in Bal. 0102, Har. H, plate IX, and Har. B on the title-page. The garments, mostly *dhotīs*, in Ajanta and Bāgh are nearly all woven in plain stripes. Some of these stripes are more elaborate and are woven in small diced patterns, both in Ajanta and Bāgh, not unlike some bands of pattern on the garments in Bal. and Har. examples, plate IX, already referred to. In one instance at Ajanta, Cave I, said to be fifth or sixth century, the stripes show rows of geese—the only example noted at Ajanta of the use of an animal pattern on a textile. In the north, at Toyuk, winged lions occur in a widely spaced spot pattern (Toy. VI. 02, plate VIII). Simple spot patterns appear on *sārīs* worn by a few figures at Ajanta, and on garments figured on painted wooden panels from Dandān-oilik. The use of white dots and rings to form patterns is common to Ajanta, Toyuk, Tārīm sites, and Turfān; and, it may be interesting to note, in early medieval veils in Europe.

The evidence of Chinese influence mingled with the art of other races declares itself in small details in compositions which, as a whole, are un-Chinese in their conception. In such rigid and formal schemes as those of Bez. xii, plate XXVIII, and Bez. iii, plate XVI, quite unlike the invention of a Chinese artist, there are buildings in the upper corners, Chinese in design and bearing a Chinese character written on the gable-end; the cloud-like rendering of floral forms in the vesica borders and the treatment of details on the armour of certain figures are quite Chinese. The badly damaged pictures, Bez. x. K–O and Bez. x. P, Q, plates XXIV and XXV, are conceived and drawn with that freedom, lightness of touch, and such

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quaint conceits and skill in portraying vigorous action as one associates with Chinese performance and fantasy. Something of this freedom from restriction to canonical rules, observed in other examples, may perhaps indicate Tibetan influence. Cursive inscriptions in Uigur, written on several of the more formal compositions, suggest Turkish craftsmanship.

The task of detaching from their walls those paintings which were still in position was a delicate and laborious business; and the subsequent packing for the long journey by road over some of the most difficult country in Asia, in a manner that would ensure their delivery intact in New Delhi, was an equally exacting labour. The different qualities of plaster encountered required appropriate methods of procedure. Some of the plaster was hard and brittle; some sandy and gritty and inclined to break into small fragments. Other examples were just mud mixed with straw, hair, twigs, husks, pieces of rag, and in fact anything that would help to 'bind' it. In this class there were many different varieties with which I became intimately acquainted in the course of mounting and reassembling the fragments.

The paintings were cut from the walls in slabs about two feet square and two inches thick by means of a saw or other suitable tool after the painted surface had been protected and supported by a padded board. When the plaster was excessively brittle, it became necessary, in the case of masonry structures, either to remove the wall and so release the plaster surface, or to leave the painting undisturbed. (Sir Aurel Stein took this last alternative in the case of the fine Mīrān V picture which was later ruined by the clumsy efforts at removal by a Japanese 'archaeologist'.) The slabs thus cut out were packed in pairs, face to face, with wadding between; firmly bound together, and packed tightly in strong wooden cases. The cases were then conveyed by camel, yak, buffalo, bullock-cart, railway—by whatever mode of transport each part of the journey required—to their destination and into my hands.[1]

Notwithstanding the ruinous condition of most of the shrines, it is a matter of considerable and practical interest that the colours of nearly all of the paintings are as bright and fresh as when applied, a thousand or more years ago. Where the colours have deteriorated or have become obscured it is generally due to the action of smoke from camp-fires lighted by intruders who have found the caves or structures convenient halting-places; or to infiltration of water through broken roofs, sometimes bringing down streams of liquid mud; or to deliberate defacing

[1] For their subsequent treatment see my paper in *Indian Art and Letters*, vol. VIII, no. 1, 1934.

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by iconoclasts. It would be well that these facts should be understood by well-meaning enthusiasts who, mistakenly, advocate varnishing or otherwise treating ancient mural paintings, whether in *fresco* or *tempera*, still *in situ*, to 'preserve' them. It cannot be too strongly insisted, that not only is such treatment unnecessary but that, as has been demonstrated in the past, instead of preserving, it only hastens destruction. With the arrest of such active causes of destruction as those above mentioned, the paintings will endure by their own vitality, and need no doctoring.

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PLATE XIV	Wall painting from Bezeklik, Shrine iii
PLATE XV	Wall painting from Bezeklik, Shrine iii
PLATE XVI	Wall painting from Bezeklik, Shrine iii
PLATE XVII	Wall painting from Bezeklik, Shrine iii
PLATE XVIII	Wall painting from Bezeklik, Shrine iii
PLATE XIX	Wall painting from Bezeklik, Shrines iii and iv
PLATE XX	Wall painting from Bezeklik, Shrines v and xi

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PLATE XXI Wall painting from Bezeklik, Shrines v and x

PLATE XXII Ceiling, wall, and floor painting from Bezeklik, Shrines iii and v

PLATE XXIII Wall painting from Bezeklik, Shrines iv and vii

PLATE XXIV Wall painting from Bezeklik, Shrine x

PLATE XXV Wall painting from Bezeklik, Shrine x

PLATE XXVI Wall painting from Bezeklik, Shrines ix, x, and xi

PLATE XXVII Wall painting from Bezeklik, Shrine xii

PLATE XXVIII Wall painting from Bezeklik, Shrine xii

PLATE XXIX Wall painting from Bezeklik, Shrine xiii

PLATE XXX Wall and ceiling painting from Bezeklik, Shrine xiii

PLATE XXXI Wall painting from Bezeklik, Shrines xiii and xiv

PLATE XXXII Wall painting and figure in stucco relief in Dandān-oilik, Shrine D. II

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TITLE-PAGE

PAINTED FRAGMENT, PROBABLY FROM BALAWASTE

HAR. B. shows the figure of an adorant kneeling probably between two standing Buddha figures (missing) of which the edges of the vesicas appear to right and left. His hands are folded in devotion with the thumbs sharply abducted,[1] and on the back of the right hand is drawn an eye, which should perhaps more correctly be on the palm, but this being hidden the painter has adopted an unorthodox alternative. There is deliberate disregard of accuracy in the drawing of the necklet, carcanet, and left armlet. From behind the shoulders rise two sharply pointed leaf-like forms, representing flames. The bands of colour forming the nimbus and the border of the vesica on the right are without ornament, a condition found also in Bal. 0200, plate V, Har. C., plate VI, and Har. D., plate VII; and the thorn-like flickering white flames surrounding the dark field of the nimbus appear also in Har. D. The figure is nearly related in racial type and general presentation to the figures in Har. C., reproduced in plate VI. Like those, the torso, of 'leonine' proportions, and arms are nude and the *dhotī* covering the legs is of richly figured material. The face with its heavy-lidded eyes, aquiline nose, and cupid-bow lips proclaims the near relationship. Other points of resemblance occur also in Bal. 098, plate V. The pose of both figures is nearly the same and both wear a similar kind of ear ornament. The narrow waisted trimūrti deity, Bal. 0200 in this plate, is also related in style.

Sasanian stylization is evident in the ornamental enrichment of the caps worn by the three figures in Har. B. and Har. C., and in the pattern of the fabric of the *dhotī* in Har. B.—a repeating circular patera surrounded by 'pearls'.[2] Kha. i. E. 0047, plate V also has ornamental details of Sasanian inspiration. Circular paterae half-rosettes, 'pearls', enclosed palmettes, and acanthus type of ornament are used in some measure in all these examples referred to. The sites Bal., Har., and Kha. are in or near to the Domoko oasis and the paintings appear to have come under a common influence.

[1] See Introduction, p. xxvi.

[2] This motive is found in many of the ancient textiles from graves at Astāna. See Stein: *Innermost Asia*, p. 676, plates LXIX, LXXX.

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PLATE I

PAINTED FRAGMENTS FROM MĪRĀN, SHRINE III

A SHORT description of this shrine is given in the Introduction,[1] and here it is necessary to discuss only the painted decoration upon the evidence of the fragments recovered from the ruin.

From his observations recorded by Sir Aurel Stein on the spot at the time of the discovery, he considered that there had been two definite bands or registers of pictorial painting, one above the other, and below these a painted dado. The paintings had become detached from the ruined walls, and from time to time portions had slid down to the floor of the circular cella, coming to rest in the progressively accumulating debris. Those fragments which lay nearest to the foot of the wall would probably have been the earliest to fall and, therefore, from the highest positions, and successive falls would be lying over these. The uppermost layer on the floor would, on this assumption, be the latest to fall and would be from the lower register immediately above the dado. The dado itself, in so far as it had survived, had not become detached and had had a measure of protection from the fallen fragments piling up against it. It is quite impossible to reconstruct the subjects of the paintings from the fragments recovered or, with certainty, the whole scheme of the decoration; but Sir Aurel Stein considered that the portion marked M. III. 003 formed part of the subject in the lower register; and I am inclined to think that the legs, M. III. 004, plate II, belong to the figure whose arm and flower-laden hand appears on the right of M. III. 003. Although they are here reproduced to very different scales, from their actual size they could have belonged to the same person. Reconstruction being obviously impossible, the fragments can be considered only individually. The difference in scale in reproduction therefore matters little, and has been generally prompted by the desire to demonstrate technical qualities or for convenience in compiling the plates.

M. III. 002

A male figure, perhaps that of Gautama Buddha, although without halo, is seated on a dark, rosette-studded *masnad*, turned slightly towards the right, with his feet firmly planted on a footstool. He addresses an assembly, and his general pose, the action of the right hand, and the emphatic posture of the left express confident

[1] See p. xx.

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assurance in the matter of his discourse. His straight-set, wide-open eyes and obstinate mouth indicate concentration on his argument. Of his audience two persons only are revealed in the fragment. The figure on the right is probably a person of some consequence judging from the character of his head-dress, but assumes, with his folded hands, a bearing of reverence and rapt attention. Like the Teacher, he is barefooted, but has no footstool. Of the other person, the drapery over the knees and the upraised forearm only are visible. The position of the fingers, first and fourth upright and the middle two folded down, seems to warn off any lurking evil influence.

The head-dress of the figure on the right is of a pattern which seems to be peculiar to the Mīrān paintings. It consists of a kind of white, conical *pagṛī* or cap with horizontal folds or pleats and a close-fitting head-band supporting two (or more) upstanding semi-lunar red flaps. The faces are of rather Semitic type, with fine straight-set eyes; arched eyebrows, well separated above the nose; small but thick black moustache carefully pointed and a thin wavy lock of hair falling in front of each ear. The hands are strong and broad with the thumb abducted and short finger-nails. The footstool has 'lion' legs, a type found also in Gandhāra sculptures.

The angular green patches in the foreground are rather confused in drawing, but perhaps represent some kind of fencing or Buddhist rail.

M. III. 003

Fragment from a picture of the Buddha teaching, attended by six disciples. The Buddha has his right hand raised with the thumb bent inwards touching the second joint of the third finger, that is, the eighth joint. This may symbolize the Buddha expounding 'the eight-fold way' or the eight Pāramitās. The left hand is low, probably holding up his loose robe, which is of the traditional type. His rather Semitic face is youthful, with a small but natural moustache, arched eyebrows, and straight-set, wide-open, speculative eyes. His hair rises into the typical *uṣnīṣa*, and a thin lock hangs in front of the ear. The ears, although large, are not of the grotesque length generally found in later paintings, and the lobe is pierced with a very small hole. No *ūṛnā* is visible on the forehead. The nimbus is a simple disk.

Behind the Buddha are grouped the six clean-shaven disciples, also Semitic in appearance, their heads arranged in two rows of three each, one above the other; the nearest to him in the upper row holding a yak-tail *chaurī* in his raised right hand. There is a commendable attempt to impart individual character to each of these

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figures. The nearest, and evidently the eldest, has his hand appearing from inside the top of his robe, grasping its upper edge as in some Roman sculptures—the Sophocles of the Lateran Museum, for instance. There is notable delicacy in the use of soft grey and pale rose-pink in these heads.

To the right of the disciples appears a naked right arm with the hand grasping a bunch of white buds or flowers, apparently in the act of throwing. Forming a background to the arm is part of a tree painted as a dark mass diapered with red and white flowers and poppy-like leaves in greenish-grey. On the extreme left is a similar mass of black on which are scattered well-drawn leaves in grey-blue.

The flesh contour lines of the Buddha are freely drawn with a broad brush in light red, and emphasized with lines of reddish-brown. Along the sides of the nose, line of jaw against the neck and of forehead below the hair, round the chin, and for wrinkles in the neck, the light red only is used, giving the effect of rough shading. The eyes have brown irises outlined with black, black pupils, and white eyeballs. The impasto of the white in some of the eyes is so thick as to catch an actual high light.

M. III. 009

A fragment showing the shoulders and traces of the left side of face of a figure facing front. The garments are unusual and rather Byzantine in character. A green tunic is topped with a straight white band across the hollow of the neck. The rich crimson and white garment, or garments, covering the shoulders seems to end just below breast-level, and might be a sort of cape or tippet with a white border, or the white may be a separate short stole. Quoting from my original notes made with the actual painting before me: 'Beneath these ends [of crimson and white bands] appears a dull grey garment, possibly part of green tunic discoloured.' I quote this because these details do not come out clearly in the reproduction. I also noted, only faintly discernible in the reproduction, a yellow ear-ring with a bunch of three beads on the ring. To the right is a portion of the face of a second figure with a mass of black hair (?) hanging by its side. The right eye is almost complete, with the white in strong impasto. There seems to be a yellow nimbus behind this head. It is well executed and probably by the same hand as M. III. 0010 and M. III. 0033.

M. III. 0010

This fragment of a young hairless face is particularly interesting for the technical

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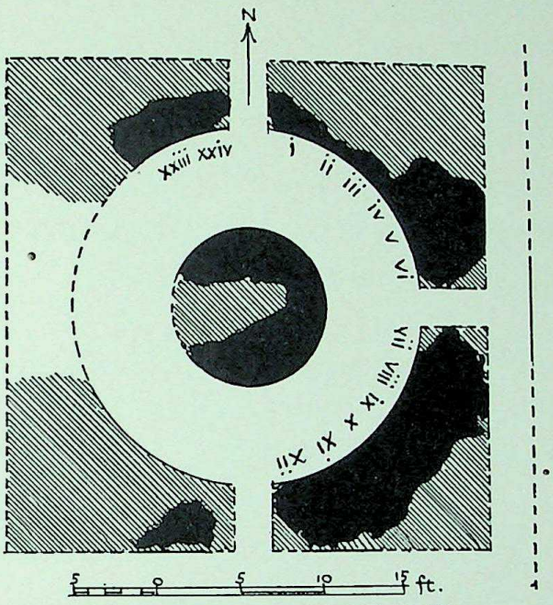
skill shown in the painting. A fleshlike bloom is achieved by white hatching over the pink, not unlike the technique of the early Sienese school. The lights on the chin, expressed by a rapid spiral stroke of white; the lights on the lower lip, obtained by 'reserving' the lighter pink; the white line following the bow-like curve of the upper lip and the emphatic touches of black, are all evidence of the rapid work of a very competent hand, working with complete assurance in accordance with a matured formula. The white line beside the face, probably from the head-dress, effectively relieves the flesh colour of the cheek from the dull yellow of the background, which may be part of a nimbus.



PLAN OF RUINED SHRINE M. III.

M. III. 0033

This fragment, showing part of a face, nearly life-size, has qualities similar to those of M. III. 0010, and is probably by the same artist.

M. III. ii. and M. III. viii

These are two sections selected from the dado of the circular cella of the shrine. The original positions of the 'angel' figures, as recorded by Sir Aurel Stein, are shown by the small Roman numerals in the plan. They represent the busts of winged figures rising from the hollows of a series of lunettes painted round the lower part of the wall in the same manner as the festoon in M. V., shown in plate III. The pose of the heads, looking alternately right and left, with a slight upward tilt, thus formed pairs.

In this case the festoon is not floral and is not supported by *putti*, but is just a series of loops, with no surviving decorative treatment immediately below. But still lower, to quote Sir Aurel Stein's record written at the time of discovery; 'Below the row of lunettes there stretched a horizontal band about 9 inches wide, filled with eight or nine wave lines in black, and once, so far as could be judged from the damaged surface of the plaster, extending also upwards into the spandrels left between the lunettes. This band, poorly preserved in most places, was curiously suggestive of the sea.' The face contours are delicately round. The eye-

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brows are moderately arched and well separated; and although the mouth is very firm, the division between the lips being a straight line, the hardness is modified by the curved red lines of the lips and the dimples at the corners of the mouth. The arrangement of the hair, partly broken away, is that of a boy, and although the rippling lock in front of the ear is rather effeminate in its length, the fashion was affected by men, as several examples here reproduced testify. The combination of the boy's hair with the effeminate love-lock, may signify asexuality.

The winged figure rising from a festoon is often found in Gandhāra sculptures, and wings as an indication of the divine or super-human are of early incidence all over the West, Middle East, Egypt, Persia, and China. The conception does not seem to have extended to India excepting in the north-west, where it was probably introduced from the West, but even here did not persist beyond the Gandhāra or Kuṣan period; nor did it continue in Chinese art.

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PLATE II

PAINTED FRAGMENTS FROM MĪRĀN, SHRINE III

M. III. 004

THESE fragments which had fallen from a picture above the dado of the circular cella, showing the legs of a figure standing with feet apart, turned towards the right, may have belonged to the figure whose right arm appears in M. III. 003 (plate 1), reproduced to a different scale. The stance is appropriate to the act of throwing, in which the arm seems to be engaged. The garment, red-brown, is gathered well up the thighs and a loop of a buff stole swings out to the front. The toes of the right foot rest on a white ground shaded with pale grey. The flesh is bright pink shaded with warm grey and pink. The background is black, as is also the ground colour of the tree in M. III. 003.

M. III. 005

Shows portions of three heads of disciples, two looking towards the left and the third downwards towards the right. The treatment is similar to that of M. III. 003 (plate 1), and there is the same expression of individuality by variation in complexion. In the upper face is shown the grey resulting from shaving off a heavy beard. The background is vermilion and white.

M. III. 006

This fragment shows parts of the heads of two personages of the same type as the adorant in M. III. 002 (plate 1). They look in opposite directions with intent expression in their wide-open eyes. They wear the distinctive head-dress which seems to be peculiar to these Mīrān pictures. The face to the right shows full lips and a small, natural, black moustache. Both have the customary black locks of hair falling in front of the ears. The eyes are large and the impasto of white gives a most effective sparkle to the expression. Background, vermilion.

M. III. 0011

Part of the face of a rather senior person of stern and obstinate expression. The eye is heavily shaded by a thick black edge to the upper eyelid and the strongly arched eyebrow descends at its inner end in a definite frown. The full-lipped mouth is rather pursed with an obstinate firmness accentuated by the expression

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of the nostril, downdrawn tip of the nose, and prominent chin emphasized by an encircling red line. Altogether not an amiable character. There is very little shading to the light buff flesh. Background, light buff. The execution is bold but rather poor.

M. III. 0017

Shows a group of three seated figures facing towards the left, similar to the small figure in M. III. 002 (plate 1). Behind is a fourth figure of the same type. All are fragmentary. The most complete shows that the hands were folded reverentially, and the same pose is that of the figure to the extreme right, whose arms and part of hands are visible. They wear loin-cloths (*dhotīs*) gathered about their legs, and stoles draped over the shoulders. The front of the body and the arms are bare. The figure to the left wears a red-brown *dhotī* and bright red stole; the middle figure, a light green *dhotī* and white stole; that on extreme right, a pale yellow *dhotī* with no stole visible. The flesh is light, tinted with bright pink and shaded with grey. The drapery is shaded or contoured with a suitable colour; red with black lines; green with dark grey; white with pale grey, and yellow with red. In the case of the white and green, the folds are represented as shades rather than as lines. The flesh contours are red-brown. Background, visible between the legs wearing green and yellow *dhotīs*, is rich red.

M. III. 0019

The heads of two girls with hands folded together as in adoration or respect as they gaze, wide-eyed, towards their left. The faces are fair with pink cheeks and are painted with very definite chiaroscuro, the shades being pearly-grey. The almond-shaped eyes are straight but rather too near together and the general expression is animated, slightly amused, and very observant with the expectant curiosity of feminine youth.

The artist who painted some of these Mīrān pictures had a faculty for suggesting character and in the present case there is a cleverly conveyed difference of character in these two girls. The girl to the left is very young and ready to be just amused by whatever the business may be that is going on. The other seems slightly older and more sophisticated and calculating; inclined to criticize the details of the proceedings.

The slightly smiling lips are solid red, and the necks have the much-admired

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transverse wrinkles indicative of well-being and superior birth. The black hair is long and stylishly dressed, with tresses falling behind the ears to the shoulders; and wavy black love-locks on the cheeks. The precise and fanciful arrangement of the hair on the forehead of the right-hand girl denotes care and perhaps a gentle upbringing. The eyebrows are delicately arched and well separated and the ears are not too extravagantly elongated. White bands crown the hair of the girls, somewhat resembling a Brittany girl's cap and on each side of the face of the left-hand girl are rich pink pendant bands; perhaps from her cap. The robe of this figure is yellow, outlined with red with V-shape opening at the neck; sleeves, reaching to the wrist, and a dark ornament, probably a flower, on each shoulder. The robe of the other girl is similar in form, but light green outlined with dark grey. Background, vermilion.

These may be the two daughters of Prince Vessantara as they stood in their father's chariot, ready to play their part in the drama of renunciation.

M. III. 0031

The head of a person of importance turned three-quarters to the right and intently watchful. His rather resentful expression seems to suggest a doubt as to the outcome of whatever proceedings are in hand, but which he has no power to influence. Type and treatment are the same as in M. III. 002 (plate 1). He wears a white stole. Background, vermilion with buff architectural details roughly outlined with red.

M. III. 0032

Shows the head of a young man of similar rank to the last but rather older and of stronger character. His gaze is to left front and his hands are folded in adoration. Small patches of a vermilion stole are visible at the shoulders. Above, appear the toes of a pink elephant. Background, pale yellow.

M. III. 0034

This part of a face is similar in type to M. III. 0033. Being hairless, it is probably the face of a disciple. The two curved lines to the right are from the border of a nimbus.

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PLATE III

PAINTED FRAGMENTS FROM MĪRĀN, SHRINE V

M. V. Dado

THE general plan of the building closely resembles that of M. III. This portion of a dado is from the left hand (going clockwise) of the northern arc of the circular cella surrounding the stūpa enclosed in the shrine. The component portions were photographed in New Delhi, for colour reproduction, in sections and in joining them on the flat, the border lines are necessarily slightly distorted; but this does not affect the accuracy of the continuity of the scheme. According to Sir Aurel Stein's account the dado extended right round the cella wall, interrupted by the entrance opening on the east side, and possibly by a similar opening on the west, where, however, the structure was in too ruined a condition to afford evidence.

The general scheme consists of a heavy floral garland, carried on the shoulders of youthful supporters placed at regular intervals and undulating completely round the shrine. From each hollow formed by the downward droop of the festoon between supporters rises a typical head and bust of a man or woman.

It is a motive widely used in Gandhāra sculpture, but it does not seem to have survived into later periods in India or Central Asia. Festoons of fruit and flowers, depending from ox-skulls, were used to adorn temples in ancient Rome as offerings; and the motive, in decoration, has persisted widely in the West, but not quite in the form of a continuous garland carried by human supporters. In the Renaissance and later, the festoon hung from skulls, masks, ribbon bows, or rosettes.

The supporters in our example, reminiscent of Italian *amorini* who have adopted Eastern habits, are sometimes clothed in Persian garments consisting of a narrow-sleeved tunic and Phrygian cap, and sometimes only in a scanty loin-cloth.

The first supporter on the left is of Persian type with a very attractive, intelligent, and animated face. He is dressed in green with a Mithraic cap of the same colour. In the hollow between him and the next supporter was a female head and bust, now too defaced to make out. Quoting Stein: 'she was dressed in a reddish-brown vest with black stole' and 'the right hand seemed to hold the end of a three-stringed musical instrument'. The next supporter is also faded. He seems to face to the left, and the fingers of his left hand, grasping the garland, appear just above

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the double cincture. The head of the black-bearded man with heavy moustache and long bushy hair in the next hollow is badly damaged. He probably faces to the right. His green coat seems to have broad revers of, perhaps, brown fur. Then comes a supporter of very Semitic visage, nude to the waist. His expression is bright and happy. The fingers of both hands are curled over opposite sides of the loop of the garland which he carries cheerfully on his shoulders. His head is partly shaven, leaving a thick tuft on the top. The head of the beautiful girl or *peri* in the next hollow is tilted slightly as she turns to gaze, with a contemplative expression of wide-eyed innocence and a delicate blush on her cheeks, in the direction of the bearded man to her right. Her well-separated eyebrows are delicately arched and her rather full rosy lips have a provocative pout. Her black hair, smooth over the forehead, falls in a bunch to the nape of the neck, which is plump and has the usual desirable horizontal creases. Like the two girls, M. III. 0019 on plate II, she has long, carefully ordered 'kiss-curls' caressing her cheeks. Red jewels or blossoms adorn her ears, and on her head is a tiara of white flowers with pink centres. An ample, green stole is draped over her left shoulder.

The supporter to the right of the damsel has been briefly alluded to in the Introduction.[1] He seems to be practically nude, and his head is partly shaven like that of the preceding boy. Unlike all the other *putti*, he does not seem happy. His face and the tilt of his head bear an unmistakable expression of weariness and perhaps of pain. The reason for this is disclosed by the uplifted left foot, grasped by his right hand as though to relieve and comfort it. He has been standing too long, and the foot has become tender or is painful from some other cause. The fingers of the left hand appear over the upper loop of the garland. It is an unexpected incident, perhaps inspired by a sudden whim of the artist, very efficiently portrayed. Apart from the interesting touch of human feeling, so eloquently shown, there is the surprising and significant fact of its precise repetition on the Kaniṣka casket in the Peshawar Museum,[2] and again on a fragment of Gandhāra stone sculpture in the British Museum.[3] There may be other replicas which are unknown to me. Whether just the whim of an artist or bearing some deeper significance, its archaeological value as an additional link between the Mīrān paintings and the Kuṣaṇa period, and definitely with Gandhāra, is unquestionable. The point of chronology naturally arises: which of these three examples is the earliest? And which, if either, is the prototype? Then comes the bust of a young man, looking

[1] Cf. p. xx.

[2] Fig. 1, p. 13.

[3] Fig. 2, p. 13.

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to the right. His square head, low brow, and strong jaw have a rather Roman appearance. He is clean shaven, has short curly hair, bushy at the neck, and large straight eyes. His right hand is held up easily in front, showing the first and fourth fingers raised and the middle two turned down—a well-known gesture of defence against evil, and a precaution which his rather anxious expression suggests is justified. The same gesture is used in playing the classical game of *mora*, and Stein considered that this is the implication here. But the same sign is made by one of the persons listening to the discourse in M. III. 002, plate 1, an occasion when it is unlikely that such diversion would be indulged in. I am inclined to think that in both cases an attitude of protection against evil is intended.

The last supporter is a pleasant and rather nervous-looking boy wearing a mauve Phrygian cap, below which his hair is arranged in a very neat row of tight little curls across his forehead. His right arm is brought across the front of his body, but the positions of both hands are obscured by damage to the painting. Alternate pairs of the supporting *putti* face each other, as do the busts, alternately male and female; and in the part of the dado here reproduced the pairs of *putti* look towards the females, and so turn their backs towards the men; but this arrangement is not constant throughout the cycle and has perhaps no significance. The pairs of *putti* are alternately clothed and half-nude. The clothed wear Mithraic or similar caps, and the others are bare-headed with leaf-shaped tufts of hair on their otherwise clean-shaven scalps.

The garland has lost most of its detail, appearing as a black band tied with cinctures at regular intervals and a group of three disks (fruit or flowers) on each side of the cincture. It is probable that leaves and blossoms were originally painted on the black, as on the tree in M. III. 003, plate 1. At the lower part of each downward curve is a light elliptical patch from which all details have faded. In Gandhāra sculpture, this position is occupied by a group of large leaves, fruit, or a piece of drapery. The pink and green rosettes beside the busts serve to furnish otherwise awkward spaces and to give a steadying balance to the design.

Black and buff border lines separate the dado from the subjects in the register above. There is not enough of this to make out the scheme. All we can recognize are several feet of men and animals, besides traces of other details, on a red ground. There are cloven hoofs, pointing to the right, some lion's paws, and a right human foot turned towards the left. The owner of the human foot is probably leading or controlling the lion-like creature, whose appearance, confronting

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the cloven-footed animals (oxen?), seems to have brought the latter to a sudden halt.

The surface is abraded, faded, and badly cracked, and large portions are missing.

Fig. 1. KANIṢKA RELIC CASKET.

Fig. 2. STONE SCULPTURE FROM BUNER, GANDHĀRA.

M. V. vi

This fragment from the southern hemicycle of the cella shows a youthful head turned three-quarters to the right, rising from the hollow of the festoon. The square head with broad, low forehead, rather flat skull and strong jaws, presents a somewhat Roman character. The eyes are large and straight-set with well-arched brows. The nose, depressed at the bridge, is slightly hooked towards the end like those of the M. III 'angels', plate 1; but the line, being rubbed off at the point,

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gives the misleading appearance of a snub. The hair seems to be close-cropped, but a lock is allowed to come down in front of each ear. The treatment of the flesh is the same as that of the 'angels', plate I, but shows less animation. The lips of the childish mouth are solid red, without high lights, and there is a rather dull expression in the heavy-lidded eyes. There is a trace of pale green drapery beside the neck, and on the extreme right, very much effaced, is part of the sweeping band of the festoon. The red and green rosettes beside the head have circular, buff centres with red rings representing stamens or seeds. The general shattered condition of the surface indicates the very brittle nature of the plaster.

M. V. x

Also from the southern hemicycle comes this badly faded head of a boy, supporting on his shoulders a loop of the festoon and wearing a Phrygian cap. The festoon forms a black background to the head and descends over the shoulders on either side. Just above the highest of the three pink disks (flowers?) to the right, can be seen some fingers of his left hand; and below the disks, the broad band of the cincture binding the festoon. The oval face of the boy, turned towards the left, is delicately featured and has large eyes, looking left, and small mouth and nose. Black hair shows in a narrow fringe across the forehead, below the edge of the cap and down in front of the ear, which is concealed by the side flap. His right hand holds a small bowl against his breast. He wears a red garment, of which traces only remain, and his cap, with point jauntily curled over, is pale buff.

M. V. 004

This winged figure rising from a lunette is from the inner wall of the south side of the corridor surrounding the outer, square body of the shrine. Akin to those figures of M. III, plate I, it is of inferior workmanship in both technique and drawing. The figure is turned to the front; the head upright, turned three-quarters to the right with the eyes looking in the same direction. The head is of squarer and shorter type than those of the M. III 'angels', and the neck shorter. The flesh is painted flat white, devoid of the delicate tinting of cheeks and transparent shading characteristic of the M. III series. All contour lines are black and hard and the eyes are solid black. Red is used only on the lips. The black hair is curly on the forehead, covers the head and comes down the sides of the face. The leaf-like tuft of the M. III heads here shows itself as a slightly higher mass. The wings are

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thinner than those in M. III; and the curve of the lunette rather flatter. On the broad black-festooned band are roughly drawn scrolls effectively painted in red outlined with white.

These rough scrolls have special interest in being definitely Chinese in form although wanting in the quality of Chinese execution. Comparison with the 'cloud' scrolls, as I have called them, on the Chinese figured silks of the Han period discovered by Sir Aurel Stein at Lou-lan, shows significant resemblance to these, which may also be accepted as intended to typify clouds.[1] Mīrān being on the old Silk Route, it may be reasonably conjectured that pieces of old Chinese silks of the Han dynasty would occasionally find their way here; and would provide the painter with a motive so suitable for his purpose. There is nothing in any of the Mīrān paintings to suggest that the painters were themselves Chinese.

It is noticeable that among the remains of the elaborate painted decoration of these shrines or temples, there are almost no ornamental features as distinct from the figure work. There is an ornamental band round the upper edge of the chariot in the Vessantara picture, and that is composed of the same type of cloud-scroll already noticed. The rich cloth over the back of the elephant had a design of repeating circles enclosing rosettes—a motive very common with Chinese weavers in T'ang times and rather earlier. Beyond this one simple motive of the cloud-scroll, there is nothing in Mīrān Art that is referable to Chinese influence; for the rosette pattern might equally well be Western or Indian.

In the paintings of both M. III and M. V shrines, the heads are always drawn three-quarter face; with large eyes wide open but too close together, and always looking to the side—never to the front. The eyebrows are arched and usually well separated. The neck is frequently long and always has horizontal creases. The treatment of the hair presents some interesting features. The boys, or *amorini*, supporters of the festoon in M. V, plate III, when capless, have a thick leaf-shaped tuft on the top of the otherwise clean-shaven scalp. The winged figures, M. III. ii and viii, plate I, show the same arrangement, but have also a long rippling lock growing from the side of the head and falling down the cheek in front of the ear. The boy's head, M. V. vi, plate III, has normal, short, curly hair but with a more bushy mass in centre front and a short lock beside the ear. In M. V. 004, plate III, the hair, although rather short, is curly and thick with a thicker mass on top, rising above the general level, in two projections. In M. III. 003, plate I, the Buddha has

[1] Cf. Andrews: *Ancient Chinese Figured Silks.* Quaritch, 1920.

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thick rather curly hair, short but with a rippling lock falling in front of the ear, and a greatly amplified top-knot, which forms the *uṣnīṣa*. The significance of the treatment of the human hair is world-wide, and since the inexplicable indiscretion of Samson in confiding to the perfidious Delilah the secret of his strength, the hair has been subjected to many fantastic variations, prescribed by tribal or canonical edict, superstition, or just by the equally inexorable decrees of fashion; and perhaps nowhere has this been more widely observed than in India. It is an attractive subject for investigation, but cannot be pursued here.

In the Introduction I have said that the sharp black contour lines of later paintings are not found in those of Mīrān (p. xxii). A qualified exception may be made in respect of the M. V. 004 'angel', in which the contours are black and sharp; but they have not the fearless sweep and expression such as a Chinese painter would have given them. Nevertheless, there are other features in this example which suggest the work of a hand other than those which painted the M. III 'angels'. The flesh is without shading, and the neck is short. The eyes are long and narrow, the upper lid drawn with a single line. The irises are black, whereas in every other case they are dark brown outlined with black and with black pupils. Then there is the Chinese cloud scroll on the band of the lunette.

Although eyes and mouth are generally well drawn in all the Mīrān pictures and are expressive and animated, study of the nose seems to have been less successful. The Semitic curve is confident as far as the tip of the nose but the form of nostril and wing is generally meanly and inadequately sketched; giving the impression that the slight foreshortening called for presented an unsolved difficulty. Foreshortening involves an application of the laws of perspective, and judging from the drawing of the chariot in the Vessantara[1] picture on the upper part of the walls of this shrine, the Mīrān artists had less understanding of these laws than had their fellow craftsmen in the West.

[1] Cf. Figs. 135, 136, *Serindia*, vol. I.

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PLATE IV

PAINTING FROM FARHĀD-BĒG-YAILAKI

F. XII. 004

FROM a small shrine built of clay blocks, its walls about $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick enclosing a cella measuring about 8 feet by 10 feet. The painting was on the right-hand side of the entrance, placed low on the wall and therefore exposed to damage by the passing of visitors to the shrine.

The subject is the goddess Hāritī in her regenerate aspect as the protectress and nourisher of children and goddess of fecundity. Legend credits this cherisher of children with a lurid 'past'. She was a Yakṣinī, a demon goddess, promoter of disease, personification of small-pox, and devourer of babies. But whether she had exhausted all varieties of exercise for her evil inclinations and yearned for new fields of enterprise, or suffered from shock after thoughtlessly devouring her last-born, it appears that she sought or encountered the Buddha who administered a severe rebuke against her evil practices, and by indicating to her the more desirable paths, she was converted, dedicated her life to good works, and became the benign goddess here depicted.

The fearless playfulness of the children clambering about her shows the apparent thoroughness of her regeneration, and if we detect in the mingled sadness and sweetness of her expression a smouldering survival of the old fires still capable of renewed activity, they are, at least, well under control. The heavy-lidded, half-closed, dreamy eyes denote introspection in which perhaps visions of the exciting past may not all be as completely effaced or even repented as they should be. However sad her eyes, there is something of the Persian *houri* in her appearance especially marked by the rather insistent love-locks, the complementary bloom on her cheeks (now, alas, sadly discoloured), and the approved voluptuous folds of her plump neck. Her hair is decked with strings of pearls and a central jewel (broken away). Large rings seem to depend from her ears or it may be simply that the lobes are pierced with gaping holes. The halo is turquoise green surrounded with red and buff.

The badly damaged condition of the painting makes some description of detail necessary. Hāritī, dressed in a costume of Persian character, sits cross-legged, her right forearm bent to support one of the boys who sits astride her wrist. Her left arm is akimbo, the closed hand with first finger pointing downwards, resting near

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her knee. She is dressed in a sage green tunic spotted with yellow, perhaps signifying the devi's unhappy identification with small-pox. A red band on the lower edge of the tunic has a spot pattern of little circles. High above the elbows the short sleeves are trimmed with a buff (gold) braid and between this and the white elbow frill is a band of terra-cotta colour figured with green and black scrolls. From below the frills the arms are covered by the tight sleeves of a red undergarment, the purple cuffs decorated with green scrolls. On the plum-coloured skirt is a repeating pattern of terra-cotta and green trefoil flowers on a ground spotted with pearl-like white dots. A green stole comes from behind the shoulders and twines round the arms.

The five children, representing her five hundred, are more easily identified; one astride her wrist, another embracing her left breast, two astride her shoulders, the one on the left shoulder wearing a terra-cotta colour smock. The other three are nude. The fifth, badly defaced, on the left of the picture, wears a green smock and seems to be dancing.

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PLATE V

PAINTED FRAGMENTS FROM FARHĀD-BĒG-YAILAKI; SHRINE XII

F. XII. 007, 008

Two seated Buddha figures from a diaper of such figures at the south corner of the shrine. The upper figure (008) is seated on a blue *padmāsana* in an attitude of contemplation, the head slightly tilted, looking towards the left. The hands, the left lying in the right and the tips of the thumbs touching, rest in front of the body. The close-cropped black hair has a well-developed top-knot (*uṣnīṣa*). The ears have greatly elongated lobes pierced with long slits. The flesh, in greyish tones, is delicately shaded and there is a blue-grey line along the lower part of the white of the eye. The robe, which seems to cover the feet, is pale green with a red border. Behind the head is a shaded pink nimbus bordered with blue and outlined with a thin white line. The vesica is pink, bordered with green.

The lower figure (007) differs from the other mainly in the colour scheme. The flesh is shaded with burnt sienna and outlined with red; but there is some confusion in the drawing of the hands. The nimbus is shaded pink and the vesica green with a dark brown border. The robe is red-brown. The *padmāsana* is pink. The background is pale green.

There is peculiar charm in these two figures; a good-natured complacency; the calmness of physical and mental well-being combined with a watchful eye on events. A certain plastic quality in the painting distinguishes it from much of the later work, more especially that of Bezeklik where the sharp contour lines take the place of the soft lines used here. As at Mīrān, the faces are human; and here the drawing of the nose is better than at Mīrān. The low, round *uṣnīṣa*, the strong hands with short finger-nails and the flesh-like quality of the faces are characteristic of these and the Mīrān paintings. But the drooping upper eyelid here is not found at Mīrān. The lengthened eyelashes and slightly extended outer angle of the eyes are suggestive of Persian influence. The probable period of these paintings is between the seventh and eighth centuries A.D.

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PAINTED FRAGMENT FROM KHĀDALIK

Kha. i. E. 0047

THIS is a part of a large composition from the passage wall of the shrine, about $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet above the floor. A vertical, yellow band divides a series of small, upright panels on the right from a large panel on the left. The part of the large panel visible shows a portion of the petalled border (yellow, shaded with red-brown) of a vesica. On the shaded white ground of the vesica appear part of the left arm and knee of a figure seated on a lotus. The arm wears a richly ornamented armlet; and a narrow, jewelled scarf comes from behind the shoulder, falling to the thigh, which is clothed in a yellow garment. The *padmāsana* is pink. Above the shoulder, and standing on a pink lotus, is an elaborately decorated flask, with ovoid body, spreading foot, and narrow neck curving inwards as it rises from the body and outwards again to a trumpet mouth which is covered by a lid of inverted funnel shape. The flask is yellow, and from its shoulder projects a grotesque bearded mask with tongue thrust out. The mask, the form, and the decorative details of the flask recall the ancient pottery recovered by Stein, in 1900, at Yotkan, about seventy miles west of Khādalik.[1] Between the vesica and the vertical band is an architectural shaft composed of sections of crystal or other translucent material, held together by very ornate bands and crowned with an elaborate bracket capital. The ornamental details are interesting. The bands of ornament are reproductions of metal ferrules or housings such as were used in wooden buildings of the Chinese, and frequently depicted in the terrace pavilions on the painted silk temple-banners brought by Stein from the Caves of the Thousand Buddhas. The capital is a clumsy modification of beautiful Byzantine and Indian examples, expressive of a vase of flowers and leaves. The architrave supported by the bracket capital is composed of three horizontal, decorated members, in front of which comes some scroll ornament, perhaps proceding from the top of the vesica.

The narrow panels to right of the vertical dividing band, one above the other, each contain a standing figure. The upper one is a Buddha or Bodhisattva against a vesica of green and grey flames arranged *en échelon*, outlined alternately with black and red. The black hair shows a high *uṣnīṣa*. The *tilaka* is marked on the forehead and a spot in the palm of the right hand (not clear in the reproduction). Both hands are upraised—the right in *abhaya mudrā* and the left, probably counting the points of the

[1] See Stein: *Ancient Khotan*, plates XLIII, XLIV, vol. II.

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law, with the thumb against the finger-joints. He wears a white robe, and an under-robe of dark brown, below which are seen his feet standing on the seed table of a lotus. To the left, below the valance of the domed baldachino, hangs a large grelot bell.

The next, lower, figure stands on a pink and green lotus and faces towards the right, with the right hand raised in pose of protection (*abhaya mudrā*). The black hair is dressed with a floral tiara from which a narrow ribbon hangs to the shoulder. The loose white robe is draped from the left shoulder across the breast, leaving the right shoulder and arm bare. It falls in tubular folds above the ankles, allowing the hem of an under-robe to show. There seems to be a broad stole hanging down the right side, bordered at its end with a band of rosettes and a double flounce, the upper green, and the lower pink. The nimbus is green and seems to be resting in the hollow of a white crescent, of which one horn appears behind the right shoulder. The vesica is rich brown decorated with petals and buds. The garland on the head, the rosette band and petal and sepal flounces at the end of the stole, and the vesica of petals, &c., suggest a deity of fertility or the earth.

Just below appears the upper corner of a third of these small panels. The top of a head and long ear of a figure can be made out with a rope-like diadem and floating white streamer. The nimbus is green and the vesica is decorated with overlapping green, triangular sepals and pink petals.

There is considerable carelessness in execution, throughout. The soft contour lines of earlier work are absent—a thin expressionless line of black or red taking its place.

PAINTED FRAGMENTS FROM BALAWASTE

Bal. 098

THE upper part of a princely figure, probably the divine musician Panchaśikha, playing a small harp. He seems to be seated with the lower part of the instrument resting on his knees. As he bends forward, the curved frame of the harp fits snugly between his left arm and breast, bringing the upper part of the frame against his cheek and left ear; the support thus given leaving both hands free for playing. The left arm is seen behind the harp and the right is lightly extended with the hand, gracefully posed and carefully drawn, plucking the strings. The expression on the face of the musician is one of dreamy ecstasy, as he listens to

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the sounds so intimately conveyed by the contact of ear with harp; sounds which accompany the low murmur of his voice, as he croons through his slightly parted lips. His plump, round face, with heavy drooping eyelids and rather hooked nose, has a short, horizontal red line painted on the cheek and the *tilaka* on his forehead. On the lip is a small black moustache. His long, black hair is nearly covered by an elaborate *pagṛī* of red cloth ornamented with strings of pearls. The visible part of his body is either nude or clad in a close-fitting vest. The neck-band may be a border to the vest or a golden carcanet. He wears an elaborate jewelled armlet, bracelets, and ear-rings. A thin grey stole is caught over the bend of his arm. The carefully drawn harp is yellow (gold).

Bal. 0200

The principal subject on this fragment shows a seated three-headed divinity (*trimūrti*), with head inclined slightly downwards and turned to the right. The eyes are heavy-lidded and dreamy, with iris and pupil a mere dot, and the outer angle rather elongated. Between the upward sloping eyebrows a third eye is placed vertically, and above the forehead is a white, human skull, behind which the black hair rises in a top-knot. From a pearl-studded taenea, rippling tresses fall to the shoulders. The moustache is represented by thin black lines extending well across the cheeks. Grey and nude to the hips, the 'leonine' body is adorned with carcanet, armlets, and bangles, and a long yellow stole twines about shoulders and arms. Round the hips is a dark red *dhotī*, rising in a high point at the centre. On each bare thigh, lower leg, forearm, breast, and on either side of the navel is a pair of short, black strokes.

Of the four arms, the front pair are posed very similarly to those of the Teacher in M. III. 002, plate 1. The right holds a pomegranate against the breast, and the left grasps a *vajra*, now perished. The other two uphold, to right, the sun, and to left, the moon. The flesh-coloured, smiling, effeminate face to the right has elongated eyes with dots for iris and pupil; black hair, dressed high and crowned with a tiara supporting a large circular jewel. The other head, badly defaced, had a red cap or hair; and the face was probably yellow and of demoniac aspect.

There is no nimbus and the field of the vesica is grey-green, bordered with a red inner band and an outer band of red-brown, both bands contoured with thin white lines.

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An example of this figure, with slight variations, is that painted on an extremely interesting wooden panel, found by Stein at the ruined dwelling D. VII at the ancient desert site of Dandan-oiliq in 1900, and reproduced in colour on plate XL of *Ancient Khotan*. In that panel painting the figure looks the reverse way, and instead of a pomegranate in the right hand he holds a white object, which may be a drum (*ḍamarū*) but is probably a fruit. The positions of the two subsidiary heads are reversed: the smiling (female?) head to the left and the demon to the right. The positions of the sun and moon emblems (identified provisionally and probably wrongly in the panel painting as the *cakra* and *śankha*) are also transposed. In the panel the loins are covered by a tiger skin which rises to a point in front exactly as in our present figure. As everything below the knees is missing in our picture, comparison must stop there. It has been suggested that this figure, undoubtedly Śiva, and one of the numberless importations into Mahāyāna Buddhism from Brahmanic iconography, is adopted as one of the forms of the favourite Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara.

Above, to the left, is a seated Buddha figure, closely resembling F. XII. 007 and 008; with the same heavy-lidded eyes, almost closed, and the rather incredulous lift of the eyebrows. His dark red robe is powdered with rosettes of three and four white dots. The grey-blue *padmāsana* is outlined with black and has light dots on the bases of the petals. Behind is a green-grey vesica, shaped like a lotus petal, surrounded by red-brown, and the nimbus is buff. To the left are traces of other figures, turned towards the right. At top right are the toes of a large right foot resting on a lotus with buff centre studded with red rings (seeds) surrounded by a red-brown band and pink petals. The red-brown background of the upper part of the painting is dotted with white sprigs, as is the dark red of the lower part.

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PLATE VI

PAINTED FRAGMENTS PRESENTED BY MR. H. I. HARDING

As noted by Sir Aurel Stein, no definite information is available as to the provenance of the paintings under the designation Har. They were obtained by Mr. H. I. Harding, H. B. M.'s late Vice-Consul, Kashgar, from Badruddīn Khān of Khotan, and presented by Mr. Harding for inclusion in the collections in the Central Asian Antiquities Museum, New Delhi. They are said to have been the result of digging by villagers at some ruins NE. of Domoko, probably Balawaste. *See p. 1058, Innermost Asia.*

Har. A

HEAD of a Bodhisattva, probably Hāritī. The round face, half-closed eyes with dreamy expression, the pursed lips with bow-shaped dividing line, the plump neck with comfortable creases, agree in their character with these features in the Hāritī of plate IV. The ears are large and carry lozenge-shape, drop ear-rings, yellow, crossed with red lines. The forehead bears a simple *tilaka* mark. There is a faint suggestion of a necklace on the left side. The smooth, black hair forms a point over the centre of the forehead, rises in a large top-knot, and, slightly bunched behind the ears, falls in heavy symmetrical tresses, spreading at each side, behind the shoulders. A narrow red taenia, spotted with white pearls, knotted behind the bunches of hair above the ears, the ends showing beside the hair, falls below the ears. A similar pearl band encircles the top-knot. Above the centre of the forehead is a white crescent-shaped ornament resting on a base-block and supporting an elliptical grey ornament, from which all details have faded. On either side of this and resting on the taenia is a similar crescent, supporting a domed boss, outlined with black, from the centre of which springs a curving horn or rod, outlined with red. These crescents—cow's horns or moons—are, perhaps, a fusion of the ideas of fertility and Hāritī's identification with the moon-goddess Chandi. The nimbus, now a dark grey, outlined with black, is surrounded by buff and light grey bands contoured with red lines. There is a trace of dark red drapery at the lower right corner. The background is red-brown. The whole surface is faded and abraded.

Har. C

Two youthful figures, in devotional pose, are placed one on either side of a kind of console which seems to support inadequately the trabeate abutment of two angular trusses. The details are very indistinct, but the necessarily imperfect

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description here given is the result of careful inspection of the original painting.

The attenuated conical column is yellow, ornamented with encircling bands of linear scroll pattern, and rests on a grey ball which is supported on a spreading, yellow base. The small hemispherical knob at the top seems to balance a shallow, pale pink, bowl-shape capital, ornamented with acanthus decoration in red outline. The horizontal band or architrave, resting on the bowl capital, and its continuation, first sloping upward and then horizontal again, is enriched with linear scrolls in red. Above the upper horizontal members of the architrave, on each side, rests another horizontal band, the inner ends sloping upwards towards each other, decorated with red lines. A light grey background, its lower edge level with the rim of the bowl, runs right across the picture. The lower part of the background is dark red, with a group of three white blossoms on black stems to the left.

The kneeling figure on the left is one of the very few examples, in all these paintings, of a strictly profile view of the head. The face seems to be of a southern Indian or perhaps Burmese type with long, oblique, and downcast eye. The ear is normal and has a large, plain ring through the lobe. Above the simple band of the tiara is a high, yellow ornament contoured with red. The armlet, with the design of an enclosed palmette, is also contoured red. On the wrists are plain bangles. In front of the yellow necklet is a rosette. The shoulders of the figure are turned slightly, so that both are visible and with hands raised as in prayer; the narrow-waisted body, nude to the hips, leans slightly forward. The crimson skirt, or *dhotī*, is figured in white with horizontal undulating bands, studded with small dots and punctuated with larger, pearl-like spots. Between the bands are pairs of confronting beasts: one with wings, leaping forward, and the other, wingless, statant, but with one paw raised. This seems to be a Sasanian modification of an early Chinese motive, found on silks of the Han dynasty.[1] The appearance of grotesque animals in textiles occurs also in Toy. VI. 02 and 073, plate VIII; and perhaps on Har. B, on the title-page. The rug on which the figure kneels has a grey centre with oblique lines of dots and is bordered by an inner band of crimson with oblique lines of grey dots, and an outer band of dark red-brown outlined with black. Behind the figure is a grey vesica, surrounded by plain bands of dark red and grey; and the nimbus has a grey field with white border.

The figure to the right sits with the crossed legs 'full-face' and the narrow-waisted, 'leonine' body turned three-quarters to the right. With his plump face

1 See *Innermost Asia*, vol. III, plates XXXVIII, XXXIX.

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upturned and head thrown back, he wears an expression of smiling ecstasy, as he raises his hands in prayer or supplication. Like the other, the body is nude to the hips. Scarves and ornaments are as in the first figure, excepting the ear-rings, which seem to be bunches of beads. The *dhotī* is red-brown and without visible pattern. The bare feet are more accurately drawn than is usual in these paintings. The rug on which the figure sits has a red-brown centre with diagonal lines of grey dots, bordered with grey. The vesica is dark grey, bordered with red and dark red-brown and the nimbus is grey surrounded by white.

It seems probable that this figure and that on the title-page, which it resembles in many ways, are by one artist.

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PLATE VII

PAINTING PRESENTED BY MR. H. I. HARDING

Har. D

THIS picture of the upper half of the seated Buddha represents him in that state of intense mental abstraction induced by employing the prescribed expedient of suspending respiration and concentrating the gaze towards the tip of the nose. The round disk-like face is a form commonly given in these paintings to a full front aspect, of which other examples are the Hāritī heads in plates IV and VI. The heavy and rather swollen appearance of the eyelids express prolonged endurance. The drawing of the nose, seldom successfully managed by these mural painters, is especially weak—a mere symbol; and the mouth, although prettily shaped, is very feeble and of inadequate size. The ears have long, slit lobes. The short black hair, forming a sharp point over the forehead, rises in a moderate *uṣnīṣa* at the crown. Dispersed over the 'leonine' body and arms are symbolic devices, including the sun and moon on right and left shoulders; on the right pectoral is an ellipsoidal jewel of stratified structure, standing on a lotus. On the left pectoral is an octagonal many-facetted jewel, also on a lotus and emitting leaf-like flames. The double chain at the base of the neck has thin threads streaming from its end rings. Just above the waist, the well-drawn galloping horse perhaps symbolizes the horse sacrifice—the Aśvamedha—and below is a crown-like device. On the upper arms are sacred books (*pothīs*) each resting vertically on a lotus and emitting leaf-shaped flames; on the forearms, facetted *vajras*, with flames springing from their various points. Circles and triangles are distributed about the body. The elaborate device on the centre of the torso consists of, at base, just above the horse, a rectangle in which stands a vase-like object supporting a rat (?). Encircling the junction of the foot and body of the vase is a snake, with the ends of its body projecting like cords at the sides, each end terminating with a snake's head. Resting on the back of the 'rat' is a bowl-shape object which supports an elaborate palmette ornament, from the top of which rises a mound-shape mass of flames. The whole of this device is perhaps a rendering of the Churning of the Ocean, which although non-Buddhist would be in company here with other devices of Tantra or Śakti innovation.

Small patches of drapery to right, below the waist and covering the thigh, are dark red.

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The many bands of plain colour bordering nimbus and vesica are characteristic of examples from the Domoko district sitės. The little flickering white flames (?) spurting from between the radiating bands beside the nimbus are seen also on the nimbus of Har. B on the title-page.

FRAGMENT OF A PAINTING FROM MING-OI XIII

Ming-oi, or the 'Thousand Houses', is a collection of ruined shrines, north of the Taklamakān Desert, about four miles to the north of Shōrchuk and about twelve miles south-south-west of Kara-shahr. From the subjects of other paintings recovered from the walls of this 'house', it would seem to have been a monastery or ecclesiastical college. The pictures Mi. xiii. I–4, 5–9, and II–I2, now in the British Museum, give a series of scenes in which an elderly teacher is lecturing to men of various ages dressed in monkish robes, each of whom holds a writing-tablet and pen or stylus, with which he takes notes. Others are seated, each in a separate cave cell, apparently studying or writing. These pictures are reproduced on plates CXXIV–CXXVI, *Serindia*.

Mi. xiii. 10

Part of a panel showing a group of monks or acolytes standing in two rows, six behind and four in front; turned three-quarters to the left, with hands folded in an attitude of devotion. Those in front are drawn to a smaller scale than the others, perhaps to emphasize their more youthful age. All are wearing pale yellow or yellow-green robes, 'tailored' to fit closely round their narrow waists; flared at the hips, and draped over the left shoulder, leaving the breast and right forearm bare. This shaping of the robe to fit the body while retaining the looseness of the usual Buddha robe at the shoulders is peculiar, as is also the use of figured material. The patterns of the figuring are Sino-Sasanian. The men in the back row have vermilion under-robes reaching to the feet, shod with dainty black slippers ornamented with a row of white spots round the opening. The figure to the left shows the top of a maroon under-garment, crossing the breast, and a similar garment is seen on the two figures on the left of the front row. From the closed finger-tips of each monk in the back row issues a three-leaved sprig, which rises gracefully above the right shoulder and pleasantly furnishes the space between the heads. The artist has avoided monotony in repetition by permitting the third from the left to

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turn his head towards his neighbour as though to murmur some remark, an action repeated in the front row. The overlapping of the bodies of two pairs at the back is done with a similar object.

The figures, erect and broad-shouldered, have effeminate waists and hips; and those at the back have a fault, common in many of the paintings, in the disproportionate shortness of the legs. The smaller figures in front promise better proportions, but as the feet are broken away there can be no certainty of this. The heads are of a distinctive type, differing from most of those in the pictures. They are square and flat-crowned; have small straight noses, narrow, oblique slits of eyes, and small ears. The jowls have a Mongolian heaviness, and the line from the back of the neck to the top of the head is nearly straight. The form of the chin is merged in the fleshiness of the jowls; and the insignificant, pursed lips are a mere token for a mouth. It is noticeable that the eyebrows are in one case marked each by a single arched line; in the rest they are emphasized by four or five additional lines, almost straight but sloping upwards. The necks lack the 'classical' transverse creases. On the faces of some of the figures in the back line, thin, drooping moustaches and a small imperial are faintly indicated in grey; and the same tint indicates a shaven chin. A slight variety of expression is imparted by the direction of the gaze, angle of the eye, and tilt of the head.

The finger-nails are long and sharply pointed.

Although the drawing is rather mechanical and the contouring rendered in a thin, monotonous line, yet there is a certain deftness in execution.

The unusual style of robe, both in the use of figured material and in the 'tailoring' of the garment, and the wearing of shoes by monks, if these be monks, raises the question as to the sect to which they belong. Reference to the other pictures recovered from the same cella or passage, referred to as being now in the British Museum, and reproduced in plate CXXVI, *Serindia*, shows, in Mi. xiii. 4, the aged teacher wearing a robe of material figured similarly to those in our present picture. He is certainly not the Buddha; he has no *uṣnīṣa*, no *ūṛṇā*, and his hair is white. The building may have been a theological college, the aged teacher a saintly person greatly revered, and the monk-like figures in this picture pupils or devotees, who, from the implication of their wearing shoes, would seem to have journeyed from a distance to pay homage to the aged one.

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FRAGMENT OF PAINTING FROM KARA-KHŌJA

THE site from which this and other examples of wall-painting were gathered is known as Dākiānūs-shahri or Idikut-shahri, and is close to Kara-khōja in the Turfān basin, north of the Kuruk-tāgh and the Lop desert, and about 250 miles due north of Mīrān. The operations of eminent archaeologist—Professors Grünwedel, von Lecoq, and others—while commendable in saving much of the painted work from the ruthless destruction resulting from the very active attentions of treasure-seeking villagers, left little but disconnected fragments, a few of which were recovered by Sir Aurel Stein. The probable date of this piece is about the ninth century A.D., and therefore about 500–600 years later than those of Mīrān (plates I to III). Fragments of manuscripts found included Uigur, Chinese, and Sogdian, indicative of the various influences present.

Kao. I. ii. 077

This very beautiful fragment shows the upper half of a standing Bodhisattva, probably Avalokiteśvara, holding a floral branch, daintily supported by both hands. One recognizes here in the round-cheeked Mongolian face the same type as that of Mi. xiii. 10, above. With this type the artist treats the features of the face with peculiar restraint, with a seeming reluctance to admitting them within the contours of that expansive area. The eyes are mere narrow, oblique slits, with a small dot for iris and pupil; the nose, long but pinched; the mouth, pursed and inadequate; the eyebrow, a thin oblique straight line. Discoloration from moisture and mud has spoilt the pale pink complexion. Although a great deal of the mud which covered the painting was carefully removed during the process of mounting, further clearing would have done more harm than good. The hands retain most of their original tint. The ears are large with elongated lobes, deeply slit and heavily jewelled. As in many of these paintings, the black hair is effectively used to emphasize the line of the shoulder; and the manner in which it surrounds the outer line of the ear is similar to the treatment in the Hāritī in plate VI. The effeminate character of this, and the long rippling lock in front of the ear, suggest a possible transitional stage of the transformation of the Buddhist Avalokiteśvara into the Chinese goddess Kuan Yin.

Unfortunately the head-dress is missing but the white taenia is tied in a large bow above the ear, one end floating upwards and another falling downwards

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behind the hair. One end of the crown-like *mukuṭa* is visible above the ear. The nimbus was probably green, surrounded by red and buff, with red contour lines. Broad-shouldered and narrow-waisted, the Bodhisattva wears a tight-fitting tunic with half-sleeves finished at the elbows with large, shaded red and yellow petal-like frills. The elegant hands, gracefully posed, have long tapering fingers and, surprisingly, short nails. The lower part of the painting is badly damaged; but round the waist can be seen an elaborate white frill, shaded with grey, and two strings of pearls hanging from the waist. It is not necessary to describe in detail the rich jewels, nor the clever draping of the white and green stole—all clearly shown in the reproduction. Behind the figure, to the left, just below the elbow, is the end of a rectangular shelf, in perspective. To the left of that, the abraded background is covered with a mass of closely packed many-petalled rosettes in bold red outline, very faintly visible. To the extreme right, on the background, now grey-buff, is a well-drawn pink peony with green leaves; and below, two more green leaves with pink buds at their bases.

All outlines, black or red, are thin and firmly drawn. Such details as the drawing of the bangles on the left wrist, the petal-like frills at the elbows, and the sweeping lines of the bow behind the ear show the proficiency of the artist in drawing and in the handling of the brush. Much abraded and faded in parts, and discoloured by liquid mud that had run down the wall, it still presents a very beautiful example of the mural painter's art.

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PLATE VIII

PAINTED FRAGMENTS FROM MURTUK, SHRINE C. IV

THE Murtuk site in the Turfān basin, about ten miles north of Kara-khōja, is one of the many areas in this locality containing numberless ruined shrines. The few fragments of a picture, reproduced here, were recovered from the debris of a 'completely destroyed small shrine'.

M. C. IV. 017, 019, &c.

Two Bodhisattvas are seated against an architectural background. Each figure seems to occupy a separate cell or bay, lighted by an opening at the back, screened by a *chiq* or reed blind. The cells are divided from one another by narrow piers or cross walls, which support a flat ceiling; and the structure is covered by a pent roof, tiled with long slabs. Below the eaves is faintly visible a frieze of roundels probably representing the ends of rafters. The walls are shaded grey and green with red vertical bands; the roundels green outlined with black; the roof shingles grey, and coping-stones green. The background above is pink with red spots.

The figures are of a fully developed type of celestial being, found in most of the paintings brought by Stein from the Bezeklik shrines. The two presented here are rather Mongolian in appearance, but have individual character. In both, the eyes are narrow and long with arched eyebrows. The nose is long and narrow, the mouth small, and the lower part of the cheeks full and fleshy. Jewellery and coiffure are rich and elaborate. The complicated *mukuṭa* or tiara is bound to the head by a white taenia, knotted and draped behind the ears, in sharp contrast with the black hair. Long narrow stoles of a rich red seem to be animated by a strong breeze. Contour lines are red and black. The work is good and shows Chinese influence in the freedom of design and drawing. It is interesting to find the observance of modern rules of perspective in the receding line at the top of the cross wall.

PAINTED FRAGMENTS FROM TOYUK, SHRINE VI

TOYUK lies about eight miles due east of Kara-khōja. The small shrine, VI, cut into the rock, was in a ruinous condition when visited by Sir Aurel Stein in 1914; and with the exception of the painted dome, reproduced in plate x, only small fragments of painted plaster were recovered. Careful and repeated study dis-

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closed that some of the pieces could be associated together as parts of a single picture; others remain, at present, unattached fragments, often with interesting details, but otherwise incoherent. Damp and fire have contributed to defacement, and details are often difficult to recognize, or are completely lost.

Toy. VI. 02, &c.

In this reassemblage of several fragments, parts of two standing figures appear, turned three-quarters to the left front. Of the figure to the left, the shoulder, part of the side, and the loose drapery of the left sleeve can be made out. The other has lost most of its head; but part of the left cheek, the chin, covered with a scanty straight beard, and the neck remain. A buff chin-strap, obviously from his missing headgear, defines the line of the cheek. In front of his breast he holds a yellow (golden) *tazza* supported on his left hand and steadied by his right, above. The *tazza* has a cylindrical body, with short sloping shoulder rising to a narrow neck and a small trumpet mouth. Below, it draws in to a thin stem and then broadens out to a spreading base. The rich red robe worn by the man fits at the neck, with a simple collar-band, and lies smoothly on the shoulders. The loose-fitting skirt is encircled at the waist by a blue belt, from which hang a pouch and other useful articles, usually so carried by Uigur men, or perhaps mainly by those of clerkly order. His robe is made of elaborately figured material, with a bold repeating pattern of a pair of confronting, rampant, leonine creatures who seem to be jointly supporting or sporting with, a large green spherical jewel. The animals, greenish-yellow, have large, darker-coloured, wing-like tails and manes, fully displayed. The genesis and evolution of this motive and its symbolic implication are matters far too complicated to discuss here. In this present state of development it has a Sino-Sasanian character. Somewhat analogous renderings appear on textiles found by Stein in the Astāna tombs, not very far from Toyuk, some of which are definitely Sasanian.[1] But many centuries earlier are the grotesque beasts of the Chinese figured silks from the Lou-lan burials.[2] Then the Scythian influence must be taken into account; and we might even point to the Lion Gate of Mycenae. With so complicated a genealogical progress presenting itself in relation to pattern, and without taking into account its variable symbolic or mystical significance, it must suffice to rest on our designation of Sino-Sasanian and resist any inclination to delve deeper.

[1] Cf. *Innermost Asia*, vol. III, plates LXIX, LXXX.

[2] Ibid., plates XXXVIII to XLII.

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The figures seem to be taking part in some devotional ceremony such as a presentation to a saintly person or shrine.

Toy. VI. 073, &c.

This is probably part of the same, or of a similar picture, as the last. There are two adult standing figures, turned towards the left, each holding a long-stemmed branch or flower, supported by both hands. The figure to the left is badly discoloured, and the details are difficult to make out. He wears a blue robe figured with brown flying ducks and red flame-like clouds—again, a motive frequently found on actual textiles from Lou-lan and Astāna. Next is a white-robed figure with blue girdle to which are attached, on the left side, a pouch and probably cases for writing implements and eating-sticks. Against the skirts of this figure is a group of five children, in two rows, all white, contoured with black. There are faint traces of pink on the cheeks of the tallest. Two are readily recognizable and the remains of the other three it is hoped to rescue from the murk of discoloration by the aid of the clues here given. They all appear to be dressed in simple smocks but the hair of each child is differently shaven and dressed; and it is this last condition that provides the means of identification. The tallest child has a tall top-knot placed at a rather rakish angle. The next wears a fringe over the forehead and a thin tail behind. In the front row, the child to the right has two leaf-shaped locks curving right and left. The middle child has a single 'love-lock' in front, curving to the right. The figure to the left has a fringe over the forehead and a long leaf-shaped lock at the side. The two at the back have their hands folded in an attitude of devotion.

Toy. VI. 0144

Two slim, youthful adorants stand facing to the left. The taller of the two, a woman (head missing), has her hands folded at her breast. The long simple lines of her white robe are very graceful, and the figure in pose and treatment reminds one of similar figures in Gothic sculpture. There are traces of pale green on the robe. The child by her side is dressed in a simple white robe with a loose girdle round the middle, his hands tucked into opposite cuffs of his long sleeves, as in a muff. The head of the woman is broken away, as is the top of the boy's head; and the lower part of each is missing.

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The three foregoing Toyuk examples have nothing to indicate their connexion with Buddhism. They are more likely to be Manichaean, a sect of which there had been a considerable community in Turfān from a period long before the probable date of these paintings. From the same shrine, however, comes the painted domed ceiling, reproduced in plate x, wherein there seems to be nothing relating to Manichaeism. But the early followers of Mani are said to have believed also in the doctrine of the Buddha, and it is not improbable that a vacant Buddhist shrine should have been appropriated for Manichaean worship and that the paintings executed for the former tenant, being free of anything offensive to the Manichaean conscience, should have been left undisturbed.

The contours of these three paintings are in black and show considerable freedom in drawing, with a proper understanding of folds in drapery, although the details of the patterns do not conform to the accidents of the folds.

Toy. VI. 0145

The young, clean-shaven monk on this fragment wears a buff-coloured robe figured with red-brown bars. He is rather Mongolian in type, with a dome-shape top to his head and normal ears. He carries a large, golden censer from which ascending smoke is shown in black, wavy lines. To the right, on a pink-buff ground, appears the egg-shape top of the bald head of a man, probably carrying a lotus flower which is seen above on the end of a wavy stalk. Five vertical lines of an inscription in Uigur are neatly written behind the shoulder of the young monk. To the right of these are other inscriptions in Uigur, Hsi-hsia (?), and Chinese.

PAINTED FRAGMENT FROM TOYUK, SHRINE V

LIKE most of the Toyuk shrines, this one, cut into the rock, had been ransacked by local villagers for saleable material, and its walls completely stripped of paintings. The piece here reproduced was purchased by Sir Aurel Stein from a man who asserted that it came from this shrine.

Toy. V. 068

Seems to be part of the figure of a richly dressed female, of whose garments the lower edge of a short tunic and part of the skirt only are present. The pendent left

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hand, grasping a small bow, rests against the richly decorated garments. The piece is well preserved, and, with the reservation that it is insufficient to afford certainty of interpretation, the reproduction is in general self-explanatory, excepting the two puzzling buff shapes intruding from opposite sides, which I have not been able to account for. The presence of the bow may indicate that the figure is that of a goddess or a Ḍākinī. It remains, then, only to describe the very rich colouring. The tunic is bordered with rich red-brown on which are circular paterae outlined with small white dots on a blue line. In the centre of each patera is a buff circle surrounded by white dots, and a buff circle lies just within the outer dotted circle. Between the paterae are petal-shaped spandrels, blue, outlined with white. This border pattern is carried up the centre of the tunic, dividing it into two panels of olive green crossed by wavy buff lines, forming lozenge shapes. In the centre of each lozenge is a small buff circle. Between borders and panels is a narrow inner border of dark red with white dots. The 'skirt' has a rich red-brown ground with large rosettes of typical Sasanian type, consisting of an outer row of white 'pearls' on black, surrounding a four-petalled flower of alternate green and red-brown petals, edged with white and outlined with black on a dull yellow ground. Between the rosettes are blue spots bordered with white dots and with red centres, alternating with dark brown spots, red centred and bordered with buff dots. In the centre of the half-rosette on the left appears the tip of an animal's lower jaw, showing its teeth. The small fragments on the right were separated from the rest and are badly discoloured. They may have been found in the shrine by Stein's men, and were subsequently identified by me as belonging to the larger piece.[1]

[1] See Stein: *Innermost Asia*, p. 618, vol. II.

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PLATE IX

PAINTED FRAGMENTS FROM TOYUK, SHRINE IV

Toy. IV. vii. ceiling

THESE are from the ceiling and upper part of the side walls of a small corridor or lobby.

The ceiling design consists of a boldly designed lotus surrounded by white pearls, and sacred emblems in the four corner spandrels. Along the edges of the ceiling next to the walls is a simple, grey border band, obliquely hatched with black, giving a sort of cable effect. The colour of the lotus petals, now dark red-brown, was probably originally pink; and the large light circular patch at the base of each petal, now rather abruptly shaded off at its edges, would have blended better with the original pink. The curl over of one edge of each petal is common in Roman rosettes. Stamens, indistinct here, are indicated by looping curves of white dots on thin supporting lines radiating from the centre.

The four corners are occupied by flaming jewels (*ratna*), of a form frequently used—square prism drawn in a sort of perspective with the visible ends divided into four parts by cross-lines. The leaf-shape flames, issuing from various parts of the jewel, vary in their treatment.

Each of the opposite walls adjoining the ceiling has two vertical divisions, the dividing band bearing a Chinese inscription. One of the divisions on each wall shows part of the head of a figure, with nimbus, probably a Bodhisattva or perhaps a teacher. The features are drawn with a scratchy line and of a type similar to those of Kao. II. 02, plate XI. His hair is grey and he is seated under a tree represented by a black mass with shaded brown-pink and grey flowers painted on it.

The other divisions have, on one wall, a vertical oblong frame bordered with white pearls on a grey-black ground and surrounded by conventional pink flames. Dark lines divide the oblong into squares, tinted alternately pale buff and grey. On the other wall the second division is occupied by successive rows of three flaming jewels. Continuous undulating spiral bands, with serrated, leaf-like edges, are used as borders. There is a close resemblance in the acanthus-like borders, more particularly in the two bands adjoining the 'cable' borders of the ceiling, to ornament occurring in late Gothic painted glass and in Western medieval

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miniatures. A Gothic character is noticeable also in the scroll-work on the Toyuk dome in plate x.

PAINTED FRAGMENT FROM KHARA-KHOTO

THE site from which this example comes lies 600 miles to the east of Turfān. The ancient fortified town of Khara-khoto, the 'Black Town', has been identified as Marco Polo's 'City of Etzina'. Its position is such that invaders from the North found it a convenient stage on their repeated inroads. The Yüeh-chih, 'destined to become later the Indo-Scythian rulers of north-west India', the Huns, and the Uigur Turks 'had all passed along this natural highway'.

Unfortunately there is no certainty as to the actual provenance of this finely preserved piece of wall-painting, and there is no definitely recognizable reference to it in Stein's Report—*Innermost Asia*. If I rightly identify it, it was found within the town wall, but was believed by Stein to have been taken from the shrine K. K. II, which is about two miles west of the town, by members of the Russian party, under the direction of Colonel Kozloff, who seem to have ransacked this shrine with less care than vigour, causing considerable destruction and confusion of interesting matter left behind; and that in packing their finds, this piece, temporarily deposited within the town, was inadvertently overlooked.

K. K. II. 0314

This is probably a small portion of a large subject, perhaps a Buddhist Paradise, and shows a sacred tree, enthroned, on a palatial terrace approached by a sloping gangway or steps, protected by a hand-rail and panel between two octagonal newel-posts, each with a finial in the form of a red lotus rising from the green top surface of the post. The stairs are coloured in alternate green and buff bands, representing, perhaps, 'tread' and 'riser' respectively. From the upper newel-post, panelling and hand-rail, similar to that of the stairs, extend across the picture, with a band of mottled pink-buff and green, decorated faintly with a floral pattern below; and below this again, a band of formal ribbon pattern in buff on black. The bracket-shape tie in light grey (silver) with red-gold decorative bands above and below, on the hand-rail, has a distinctly Chinese character. In the foreground stands a two-headed (*jīvajīva*) green parakeet. From behind the tree, upward curving bands of white or buff, green and red, form a halo. The background behind the draped

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altar is perhaps a low wall, decorated with an 'all-over' floral pattern in black outline on buff, with the ribbon border below.

It is a careful piece of work and is exceptionally well preserved.

PAINTED FRAGMENTS FROM BALAWASTE

Har. G.+Bal. 0102, Har. H

THESE three pieces, two of which were presented by Mr. Harding, seem to belong to one picture. That the two on the left belong to one figure there appears to be no doubt. The space between them is necessary to allow for a blue band in the robe, of which one end appears at the top right of Bal. 0102. The two figures to which these fragments belonged were probably Bodhisattvas. Their elaborately figured robes are drawn with a certain mechanical rigidity and with meticulous care for the details of the patterns. The smallness of some of these details, and a certain amount of discoloration, have made it extremely difficult to reproduce the minutiae clearly; so the following descriptions may help towards their elucidation. The patterns on the robe to the left are in transverse bands of dark red-brown, red, blue, and red, this sequence repeating. On the red-brown band is a double row of small buff squares, and within each square four white dots. Alternating with these squares and placed checkerwise in relation to them are three rows of rosettes, each formed of four white dots arranged in square formation. On the red band is a centre row of long, white, lozenge-shape patterns and above and below these, in the intervals, are halves of the same pattern in yellow. Within each edge of the band is a wavy white line. On the blue band is the same arrangement of five rows of dotted square rosettes as on the red, the second and fourth rows being buff on red and the first, third, and fifth, white. The general effect is harmonious and rich, and the patterns, quite Indian in character, are such as are commonly used in the weaving of woollen shawls at the present time, especially in the North. The banded character of the fabric is especially noticeable in the garments worn by figures depicted in the Ajanta Cave paintings.

A small part of the vesica appears on the left, and seems to be bordered with pale pink and dark grey.

The fragment to the right is very similar in treatment but has less of the smaller detail. The rose-pink of one of the bands is an unusual colour in this type of textile. As in most of the pictures, the feet are clumsily drawn, with awkward, fat heels

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and unnatural toes. It is very seldom that the lotus leaf is introduced in design, and its appearance here, between the lotus flowers, shows how unsuitable and intractable it is.

The vesica has a shaded pink field surrounded by red and dark red-brown. The little white florettes scattered over the red background form another feature extensively used in the Ajanta paintings.

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PLATE X

PAINTED DOME FROM TOYUK, SHRINE VI

THE dome from which these portions were removed roofed a small cella, measuring about ten feet by eleven. Although much is missing, fallen away in antiquity, there remains sufficient to show the extremely graceful scheme of decoration, recalling irresistibly that of certain late fifth-century Byzantine mosaics at Ravenna; and in the curling leafy growths springing from the scrolling stems can be recognized forms commonly found in foliate 'Transitional' and Early English Gothic carving.

Toy. VI. 0272

The central medallion, badly damaged, contains a haloed deity seated on a *padmāsana* placed on the back of an unrecognizable animal, against a background of radiating lines. The animal, with legs outstretched fore and aft, resembles, in some respects, an elephant; but the lift of the head is more like that of a goat and is certainly not elephantine.

The scrolling stems arrange themselves gracefully in two concentric registers, or zones, round the central medallion; and within each volute, one, or sometimes two figures, are seated. The stems originate from behind a third, and outer, zone of figures, mostly missing, seated against radiant haloes. It seems probable that the figure in the central medallion represents the deity of the Sun or the Moon and that the surrounding figures are those of celestial attendants, of which the name of one—Rohinī—written in Brāhmī characters has been made out among the several short inscriptions. This would indicate that the central figure is the divinity of the Moon.

The lower part of the dome has suffered most destruction; and smoke from the fires of casual infidel tenants of the cella in later times has contributed to the deterioration of the original colouring. The stems are now a dull red-brown, outlined with red and with an added white line on one side and probably yellow on the other. The leaves and bracts are similarly outlined, and here and there can still be traced, within the outlines, grey, red, red-brown, and possibly blue and green.

The very graceful and delightful little attendant figures, each seated on a lotus growing from the end of the encircling scroll, are slim, square-shouldered, and

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long-limbed. The artist has shown extraordinary genius in the diversity of pose, of occupation, and animation distinguishing the figures. The difficulty of endowing each of these many persons with an individual interest is such as any practical designer will appreciate; and the success achieved must claim our admiration. The proportions of the figures are good and the actions natural. Although well worth close examination, the extent of effacement they have suffered has obscured many details and rendered the task difficult. To describe each figure individually here would be tedious for the reader; but a few general observations may be helpful and acceptable.[1]

The central figure, seated cross-legged, with the left hand probably at breast level, has a brown nimbus and dark green vesica. The ground colour within the enclosing circle is grey, with the radiating lines dark brown. It has been suggested that the nondescript animal, now a mere ghostly silhouette, may be an antelope, which is an attribute of the Moon deity, and also appears sometimes as the *vāhana* of the goddess of light.

The surrounding figures are sometimes full-face, others in profile or inclining to the right. They are variously engaged in teaching, presenting offerings, or, with folded hands, just adoring. Two of the volutes in the upper zone enclose, in each, two figures. In that immediately to the left of the centre, both figures turn to the right. One is on a higher level than the other and his hair seems to be dressed in the typical top-knot of a *sādhu*. Both have their hands in the *añjali* (adoring) pose. Of the other couple, the figure to the left is kneeling, and, with hand outstretched, seems to be making an offering to a seated Buddha or Bodhisattva.

It will be noticed that the hands are long and graceful and that when the thumb is abducted the separation from the fingers is very pronounced. I have already referred in the Introduction (p. xxvi), to the occurrence of this gesture in Western art.

The costumes are of two kinds; one with a long *dhotī* covering the legs to the ankles; the other short, leaving the legs bare. A loin-cloth is usual and a kind of *upavīta* or narrow shawl, crossing from the left shoulder and passing round the body below the right arm. A stole, passing over the shoulders and winding round the arms, with freely flowing ends, seems common to all. Most of the figures wear a simple head-dress (*mukuṭa*) consisting of a white head-band, knotted or with two bosses above the ears, and a central elliptical rosette. The colours of the garments ring the changes on white, green, blue, pink, red, and red-brown. The hair is

[1] Detailed description of each figure is given in my *Catalogue of Wall Paintings*. Delhi, 1933, pp. 60 sqq.

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usually black, but in a few it seems to be white. A nimbus lies behind each head, generally dark red-brown edged with white.

In both upper zones the lotus seats (*padmāsana*) have shaded pink petals, mostly indented at their edges, outlined with white and red. Those of the outer zone are pale pink with pointed petals outlined with red. One of the figures in the lowest zone, second from the left, at the lower left corner of the plate, is four-armed and is seated on a goose-like bird, most probably the Sī-murgh. He may be Kārttikeya, a son of Śiva.

In design and execution this dome is probably unique among ancient Central Asian mural paintings; and the resemblance it bears, in several particulars, to medieval ecclesiastical art of the West and especially to certain Byzantine mosaics at Ravenna, gives it additional and significant interest. It is a matter for congratulation that it has been rescued from complete destruction by the skill and perseverance of those who, under Sir Aurel Stein's direction, performed the delicate task of detaching it from its vault in small sections and transporting it safely to New Delhi.

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PLATE XI

PAINTED FRAGMENTS FROM KARA-KHŌJA

THE fragments here described were recovered from ruined shrines within the ancient walled town of Idikut-shahri, about one and a half miles from Kara-khōja in the Turfan basin.

Kao. II. 02

The ruin from which this example comes is described by Sir Aurel Stein as 'what apparently had been a vaulted cella or passage' built against the inside of the eastern wall of the town. It was choked with debris to the height of six or seven feet but 'at a height of about three feet from the floor, parts of a fine fresco composition were recovered'. Although he gives no description of the painting, this is the only piece from that shrine which came to me and it must be presumed to be the specimen referred to. As the reproduction shows, it was in an extremely bad state —shattered and abraded, but in many ways attractive. Reassembling and mounting it was a work of some difficulty and patience, and although the general scheme is clear the details and colouring need elucidation.

The scheme of the design is intended to show a region of mountains, where pine-trees flourish and forest fauna make their home. The mountains are represented by a series of imbricated lozenge shapes, with serrated upper edges, variously coloured, with pleasing effect. The lower central lozenge is pale green with serrations boldly outlined in dull red. That to the right is white with dull-red edges. To the left, dark red with darker red edges. The upper central lozenge is the same as the lower one. The colours repeat vertically—red over red, white over white, and green over green. This results in a regular sequence of change of colours horizontally and obliquely. In each lobe of the serrations is a small dark spot which was, originally, a patch of gold leaf.

Each lozenge forms the background to a group of three figures; an enthroned Bodhisattva, or the Buddha, with an adoring figure kneeling at each side. Two very incomplete Divinities are visible, one on each of the green lozenges. The upper one, whose head, neck, and right arm only remain, looks downwards towards a kneeling figure on his right, to whom he seems to extend his right hand. To the Buddha's left, a second figure sits in an attitude of devotion, gazing up at him. The flesh of the Buddha is pale, slightly shaded with grey. The hair is mauve-grey

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against a red nimbus, surrounded by grey-green. The vesica is green with red and mauve-grey borders and above it is visible the top of a stylized Bodhi-tree in black and white. Before the throne is a tessellated pavement crossed with white lines, and a step or foot-stool of the same style. The front of the foot-stool is mauve and the panel on each side green. Below the throne are two narrow bands—mauve and red—suggesting a step or the curb of a pool of green water on which float a red and yellow duck and three red balls (jewels).

The devotee on the Buddha's right, large portions of whom are missing, seems to wear a simple mauve-grey tunic bordered with buff, reaching to the knees, and he kneels on a green mat. The figure at the Buddha's left, whose face is discoloured and hair white (or it may be discoloured), is clad in a dark red monk's robe, edged with buff. He kneels on a mauve mat.

At the top of the picture sits a grey vulture whose presence indicates that this or the adjoining mountain is the Gṛdhrakūṭa hill. In the lower green lozenge the badly damaged figure of the seated Buddha has the same colouring as the upper Buddha. On his right is a devotional monk with tanned flesh, grey hair, and a red robe with grey overlap at the breast.

To the left, in the red lozenge, appears the side of a throne, similar to that already described, but with latticed panels of mauve, red, and green. A figure kneels beside it with arms outstretched, probably presenting an offering. He wears a green mantle edged with buff, a red tunic, and a mauve skirt. Behind him grows a mauve pine-tree contoured with white.

The figure in the white lozenge to right seems to be a person of some consequence. Seated at his ease on a stool, his right foot lightly touches a green mat on the ground and the left leg is drawn up in squatting pose, bringing the foot against his lap. He wears a sort of kilt, green edged with white; and a grey stole floats behind his shoulder. Behind him rises a green pine-tree.

The figures are of the tall, long-limbed, narrow-waisted type, with disk-like faces and scratchily drawn features. It is peculiar to this type that the eyebrows meet at an acute angle, giving a disagreeable expression.

The whole is an interesting composition, and although very fragmentary and faded, is still a charming piece of colour.

The imbrication scheme of diaper decoration used here and elsewhere in Turfān mural decoration is a brilliant variation of the monotonous repetition of squares containing seated Buddha figures commonly used in Buddhist shrines all

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over Chinese Turkestān. An unusually good example of the latter is that in plate XXIV. In the present case the conception of an unlimited range of mountains affords opportunity to introduce appropriately trees, birds, and animals, while at the same time providing regular spaces for pictorial representation of the *jātaka* stories or incidents from the life of Gautama Buddha.

Imbricated triangles, which by repetition must result in lozenge shapes, appear in medieval miniatures in Europe as signifying mountains, and a simple example occurs in a twelfth-century Psalter of St. Swithun's Priory, Winchester, conjectured to be copied from a picture brought from Italy in 1152.

Kao. I

This is described as 'a large complex of buildings in great part demolished' situated within the walls of the town. Among the things found in the debris were fragments of texts in Uigur, Sogdian, Runic, Turki, and Chinese. There seems to be considerable evidence that the establishment was monastic, of the Manichaean sect.

Kao. I. ii. 08, 010, &c.

This small specimen is composed of four fragments picked from the debris lying along the foot of the western wall of one of the halls. The two heads depicted are of Mongolian type and probably are those of Manichaean donors. Their headdresses are peculiar. That of the man seems to be a close-fitting, white felt hat, the lower part like a broad collar, turned up, with the rounded ends pointing forward. His scanty black hair and beard have a painfully wiry character and his bushy eyebrows are uncertain in their growth. His complexion is pink, with dark red lips. Rising beside his face is a long, curved flower-stalk bearing thin green leaves and a red globular flower at the top. He seems to grasp the stalk with both hands, the left near his beard and the right at his chest.

The woman appears to be younger than the man. She has a pink complexion, small red lips, well-defined eyebrows placed high, and a red spot (caste mark?) on her forehead and another on the cheek. Her black hair forms a straight line across her brow and falls in heavy, solid tresses, decorated with flowers, beside her face. It is probably dressed in two high loops above, curving apart and carrying between them an upright, red, egg-shape ornament—probably drapery. Her robe is red.

The execution is bold but rather careless.

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Kao. I. ii. 021, 022, 030

The damaged condition of this interesting fragment, reconstructed from several pieces, requires some description, and even with this assistance it may not be easy to recognize in the reproduction all that could be identified in the original. Parts of at least thirteen persons can be made out, who seem to represent three different types, or orders, two differentiated by the head-dress and, perhaps, a third by a garment differing from the rest. The whole crowd turns towards the left front and seems to be grouped in order of official status. In front are four wearing beard and moustache. Of these, the figure nearest the centre, the top of his head missing, has his hands hidden under his sleeves. To the left, the next has part of the top of his head missing, and all the right side of the face below the eye. The third shows only the chin, with beard, and part of the breast; and the fourth only the breast. These four wear a head-dress (missing) secured by bands brought behind the ears and tied in a small knot below the chin. The loose ends of the knot are pink. Long black streamers descend at the shoulders. The best-preserved of these faces might be that of a Russian or perhaps a 'Western Turk'. Between the second and third figures appears the lower part of the robe of another figure, over which is written an inscription in Uigur.

The six figures to the right of the centre are drawn to a slightly smaller scale. They wear robes similar to those of the others, are clean-shaven, and have a head-dress peculiar to Manichaeans—square in outline as though made of stiffly starched material, but more likely wrapped over a wire, or similar frame, as soft folds seem to fall from it at the back. Their hair shows as a formal fringe across the forehead. Three heads in front are complete. One behind has the upper part missing, and another shows only the chin. Of the sixth, part only of the robe can be seen. All these persons are dressed in a kind of white surplice with voluminous sleeves covering the hands held against their breasts. They have pink lips and all the drawing is in thin black lines.

The figure on the extreme right wears a long straight robe, patterned with a lattice of green bands with a red spot in each lozenge. The left elbow can be seen above and a black shoe shows at the hem of the robe.

The general background is dull green.

Kao. III

This was the ruin of a *stūpa*, outside the town walls 'to the south of the high road

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where it passes beyond the north-eastern corner of Idikut-shahri'. The pieces here reproduced were collected from the fallen debris in a narrow passage surrounding the shrine.

Kao. III. 021, &c.

This very fragmentary picture, probably part of a sort of *predella* from a large painting, depicts some of the punishments encountered in a Buddhist hell.

In the centre, an almost nude white woman, head and left thigh missing, stands, with hands tied behind her waist, bound to a post by a band round her body and another at her ankles, her black hair streaming lank about her shoulders. Each of the elongated nipples of her small, pendent breasts is tied round with a ligature. To add to her discomfiture a black snake coils round her right leg, crosses over in front above the knee, behind the thighs, and appears again beside her left hip. On either side stands a demon executioner, each with one foot raised and pressed against the woman's elbow to give purchase in the use of a large-toothed frame- or bow-saw with which they appear to be sawing downwards through her head. One leg only remains of the right-hand demon, and much of the middle of the other is also missing; but his face, with fierce glaring eyes, and his shoulders can be seen in the small detached fragment above. One end of the top of the red saw frame is in the steadying grasp of the left hand of this demon, and from the position of what remains of the right arm, the right hand is holding the side of the frame to exert the alternate pulling force. This type of saw is in common use to-day by Chinese carpenters. The flesh of the demons is pink and they wear green-bordered red *dhotīs* and anklets.

To the left, a small, hairy, and emaciated devil, 'a hungry ghost', very roughly but expressively drawn, is hastening away with hands upraised as though even he is shocked by the business proceeding in the centre. Or, perhaps, a prospective subject for further chastisement, who, already having been reduced by preliminary treatment, makes a desperate effort to escape.

To the right, a three-legged cauldron set amidst floating green and red flames is filled with human beings, whose agonized faces can be distinguished. Two attendant demons, of the same type as those in the centre, stand right and left. One, whose lower leg only remains, puts his foot against a leg of the cauldron, and the other seems to carry a red object on his back. Their knees and shins have guards on them, perhaps to protect them from the heat.

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Gobbets of two- and three-tongued green and red flames, dancing about the white background, contribute to the plutonic nature of the region appropriated to the reception and entertainment of transgressors.

Below is a yellow border-band and below that oblique sections of pink and red, suggestive of tiling in perspective. On the extreme right is part of a vertical band of grey ornament. All outlines are black. The drawing, although generally rather careless, is certainly expressive.

Kao. III. 019, 020, 0201

It is probable that these three pieces are not from one picture, the centre section having a type of pedestal differing from the others. They are therefore numbered individually. The general scheme represents a number of kneeling 'donors', and they probably come from the lower part of one or more large, dedicatory paintings. All the figures are of Mongolian type.

0201, on the left, shows three kneeling men; the upper part of the foremost and part of the head of the hindmost are missing. In front of them is a pedestal of curious design and unrecognized significance. Between the figures are Uigur inscriptions, and in front of the face of the middle figure is a roughly sketched diagram looking rather like a whistle. The faces are rather red and the hair and hat black, with a yellow band round the brim of the latter. The robe of the foremost man is dark grey-green, with red belt and tabs. The second is dressed in dull pink with a double belt of red and black and tabs, alternately red and black. The third is light green with a red belt and black tabs. The base of the pedestal is green with a yellow rosette above supporting a red disk, of which a very small part is present. The background is pale buff, a darker buff band dividing it from the light and dark red tiles of the pavement.

020. This has four kneeling figures similar to those in 0201. The first to the right is the most complete. It appears from this that the head is partially shaven, reserving the forehead fringe and the long tresses; two which fall rippling to the breast and another hanging from the back of the head, behind the shoulder, and half-way down the upper arm. His robe is pale grey with red belt and tabs. Before him is a vertical grey band with a repeating spiral ornament in black. Behind the man is a kind of square pedestal in perspective, with red and yellow base; or it may represent a hanging tab of textile. Among the many fragments, the upper part

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of these pedestal-like objects never appears; and, at present, it is impossible to determine their nature or purpose.

The other three figures, of which the second has been almost obliterated and all of whom have lost their heads, are similar in type, but of these the first wears a green robe, the second dull red, and the third dark grey. In front of each is a line of Uigur writing; and between the second and third is another 'pedestal'. All outlines are black. The background is white and the tiled foreground as in the last.

019. This is similar in character to 0201, with the difference that there is only one man, who wears a dull red robe; and that there is a second 'pedestal' of a slightly different type. Both pedestals are coloured red and yellow.

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PLATES XII—XXXI

PAINTINGS FROM BEZEKLIK

BEZEKLIK, the largest of the Buddhist sites of Turfān, lies in a mountain gorge between Kara-khōja on the south and Murtuk on the north, and about twenty miles due east of Turfān town. The shrines are in a series of caves excavated in the rocky walls of the gorge, and, as usual with such cave shrines, entrance porches, and sometimes additional rooms, were constructed of timber and masonry. Most of such added structures have long since perished or are in ruins, but within, on the walls and vaults of the caves, a great amount of painted decoration remained. Reference has been made to the exhaustive study of the shrines by Professors Grünwedel and von Lecoq about forty years ago, when considerable portions of the paintings were removed to Berlin. When Stein visited them about two years later, he saw that the caves were suffering further denudation and destruction at the hands of ignorant local people. On his subsequent visit in 1914 he found evidence of increased destruction, and he writes: 'With the sad proofs of progressive damage before my eyes I could feel no doubt that, as local protection was out of the question, careful removal of as much of these mural paintings as circumstances would permit, and artistic or iconographic interest would warrant, offered the only means of assuring their security.' And so, giving careful instructions to his two very capable Indian assistants, Naik Shamsuddīn and Afrāz-gul Khān, he left them to remove and pack selected portions. The result of their skilful work may now be seen in the Central Asian Antiquities Museum in New Delhi, where I had the difficult, but congenial, task of reassembling and mounting them for, as I hope, permanent preservation and exhibition. It is from these reassembled sections that the following reproductions have been made. A general plan of the group of caves is given on plate C with the shrines numbered to correspond with the numbers attached to the paintings reproduced, and enlarged plans of individual shrines, showing positions originally occupied by the paintings, are given on plates A and B.

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PLATE XII

PAINTINGS FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. i. A–D

As the plan shows, this fragment comes from the back of the partially destroyed statue-base standing in the cella. It represents part of a canopy and Bodhi tree, with a group of *devatās* looking towards it.

The supporting frame of the canopy is the dark red-brown band with yellow edges and studs, with terminal fleur-de-lis palmettes at the ends. Above the band is a group of three bell-shaped, striated domes, doubtless representing jewels, each surmounted by a flame finial. From the lower edge of the frame hangs an elaborate valance consisting of a double row of V-shape tabs in front of a narrow band of grey and white vertical stripes edged with silver guttae. Behind these are draped two rich red festooned cloths edged with larger guttae; and in front of each cloth hangs a festooned golden band carrying at its centre a large golden boss or rosette with four small ball-jewels disposed round it. At each of the upper ends of the gold bands is a pale-green ball-jewel and a pair of jewels lies midway between. From the fleur-de-lis terminals of the canopy band depend tassel-shaped pleats of cloth, each with a central pleat composed of imbricated V-shape tabs of many colours. A similar pleat hangs in the centre. Growing from below is a tree bearing great daisy-like whorls of long green leaves with pink peony centres, which partly encircle the canopy. A frieze of festooned red cloth with pleats and bows, and trimmed with silver guttae, is arranged along the top. All this complicated arrangement of drapery represents similar adornments in actual materials used in Buddhist shrines. Considerable remains of such hangings were found by Sir Aurel Stein in one of the Caves of the Thousand Buddhas.[1] They are mostly of silk, and the little guttae are real silver. It is probable that the materials were used to drape a real baldachino, erected over the cult statue that stood in most of the shrines, and that the painting is just a pictorial presentation of such drapery.

Below the frieze the *devatās* are grouped in rows of two each. Whether in this plate they are standing or sitting, as in Bez. i. H, I, plate XIII, or kneeling, as in Bez. i. M, N, is not clear, but they all seem devout and attentive to the discourse presumably being delivered by the Teacher (missing). Variety is given to the figures by differences in complexion, coiffure, and nimbus. All but one wear hand-

[1] See *Serindia*, vol. IV, plates CIX, CX.

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some tiaras fastened by white taenias with flowing ends. The lowest head with heavy, wig-like, jewel-studded hair has no tiara, but just a simple white band below the top-knot. Whenever this type of hair is worn the head-dress is usually more simple than the others. Two more examples are in this plate.

Bez. i. M, N

In this fragment, from a recess in the end wall of the shrine, four, of an assemblage of *devatās*, are evidently in attendance at a lecture by the Buddha; three with decorously folded hands and the fourth offering flowers on a golden *tazza*. All the faces wear a dreamy, tranquil, or even drowsy, expression, contrasting with the animation of the waving stoles of the lower two figures. Parts of others are visible behind the four. There is diversity in the pose of the legs, the colour of the hair, and details of the coiffure; and on the rather tanned flesh there are traces of shading colour, with an occasional slight flush on the cheeks. They all have the *tilaka* on the forehead, and the *tazza* bearer has two short red lines on the cheek. From the contours of the bust the figures are presumably feminine.

However the hair may be dressed, it is noticeable that it invariably serves to emphasize the line of the shoulders and to relieve the head from the background. The same treatment is consistently used in the painted silk banners from the Caves of *The Thousand Buddhas*.[1]

The colours of the garments are varied, and there are differences in the petals of the *padmāsanas*, some resembling those of the Chinese marigold or peony.

Bez. i. L

This fragment comes from the north-west recess, at the end wall of the shrine, and represents two heads of a group of *devatās* of the usual type, but with somewhat more haughtiness in their bearing. The shading (*chiaroscuro*) of the faces is more fully preserved than in previous examples, and shows more clearly the conventional disposition of the warm, shading tint. It is not unlikely that some of the 'shading' represents the pink powder used by both men and women as part of their 'make-up', as the lips confess the use of the lip-stick. The black contour lines of the features are thin and hard, a quality common to all the Bezeklik work, resembling pen- rather than brush-lines; but they are drawn with great freedom and assurance. The thin, single lines of the eyebrows meet in the centre, and from there is

1 Stein, *The Thousand Buddhas*, Quaritch, 1921.

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drawn the line of the rather pinched nose. The lines of the upper, drooping eyelids are slightly extended at their outer ends; an effect favoured by feminine fashion and produced on the living face by the use of black pigment (*kohl*).

Although the Buddha renounced the use of personal jewellery, the *devatās* seem to enjoy freedom from such austerity. But it is curious that although the lobes of their ears have the appearance of being adequately pierced for a generous display of ornaments, and by their elongation would seem to have formerly carried a considerable load, yet no such ornaments are now worn. Why the ears should be thus denied, while head, neck, arms, wrists, and breast are so well provided, is strange. Could it be that the inestimable jewels of the Master's utterances would brook no rivals dangling at the portals of their destination?

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PLATE XIII

PAINTINGS FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. i. H, I

THESE three rows of seated *devatās* come from the projection at the end wall of the shrine. They look towards the right, where doubtless a figure of the teaching Buddha occupied the centre of the wall. They are in the usual pose of devout attention, with hands folded. The general colour scheme resembles that of the groups in plate XII.

The figure in the top row has black hair and a red halo bordered with grey and yellow. Skirt and *upavīta* (over the left shoulder) are red, and the stole green. In the second row, the figure on the right has black hair and red halo with green border. The *upavīta* is green. The next has red-brown wig-like hair, plaited, and studded with gold ornaments. The halo is green with red and yellow borders. *Upavīta* and skirt are red. On the arms are dark red bands supporting golden cloud-scroll palmettes. The next has black hair and red halo bordered with grey and yellow. The *upavīta* is green; the stole dull pink and the skirt red. The left-hand figure in the lowest row has the same colouring as the last, but with a thin white line between the red and grey of the halo. The centre figure has red-brown hair and seems privileged to wear elaborate ear ornaments consisting of gold rosettes covering the end of the ear-lobe, two red beads below the rosette, and a large green one below these. The tiara, with white taenia, has a gold palmette in the centre with two beads below and, at the side, a red rosette with cabochon centre. The *upavīta* is red. The last figure is coloured like the one immediately above.

Bez. i. J, K

These three *devatās*, seated against a rich crimson-brown background, are from the same wall as L, in plate XII, and are similar in their ornaments and drapery to those of Bez. i. M, N in that plate. Of the first to the left, only part of the left side remains. This *devatā* seems to turn towards the others, signalling, by the position of the thumb against the first joint of the forefinger of the upraised left hand, information of the progress of the discourse delivered by the Buddha who would have been further to the left, in the centre of the wall of the recess. The second figure receives and copies the signal with the right hand while the left hand, resting on the knee, appears to anticipate, by registering a point on the third joint of the finger. The

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third *devatā* just sits with folded hands, placidly indifferent as to the exact point under discussion. In fact, both the existing faces look sleepy and rather bored with the matter they must have so often heard. The heaviness of their eyelids is accentuated by a black line defining the upper fold. All the attendant *devatās* have a decidedly effeminate appearance, although, it will be observed, they have pointed finger-nails. The Buddha forbade nuns to cultivate long nails, but the order did not extend to monks or other of the Buddha's male adherents, and *devatās* may also have enjoyed the same privilege. But this raises the question of their sex. It would be rash to hazard determination of sex by the trimming of the nails, especially as we do not know whether *devatās* were exempt from the injunction; but when to the presumptive evidence of the finger-nails is added that of moustache and 'imperial', as worn by the Bodhisattvas in Bez. vii. A–C (plate XXIII), who in every other particular seem to be as effeminate as any we have seen, we are still left in a state of uncertainty. It may be that both sexes are represented and that fashion in dress and other adornments are common to both.

From the small portion remaining we see that the figure on the left had dark, red-brown, wig-like hair with gold studs. The loin-cloth is pale pink with green hem, and the skirt dull red. A dark pink stole falls from the fold of the arm and the *upavīta* is red with a green pleat. The green halo is bordered with pink and paler pink zones divided by a dark, red-brown line.

Rippling black tresses fall in animated locks across the shoulders of the second *devatā*, who wears a loin-cloth like that of the first, over a pale grey-brown skirt. The stole is red-pink, the *upavīta* green with red-pink pleat. A red halo is surrounded by green and buff-pink. Of the *padmāsana* only the green seed-table remains.

The third figure has much the same colouring as the second, but has a dark red *upavīta*, and wears the unusual ear ornaments.

The thin, black contour lines, although rather mechanical and expressionless, are drawn with considerable freedom and skill.

Bez. i. G

This fragment is from the inner end of the south wall of the shrine and depicts two 'repeats' from rows of figures of the Buddha seated in meditation.

Repetition of figures of the Buddha is widely used as a diaper on walls and ceilings of shrines, not merely for its decorative value but for the spiritual advantages accruing therefrom, as from the offering of prayer. Faith in the constant

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recital of prayer as an avowal of reliance on the benign power of the Deity is common to most creeds; and whether the appeal be expressed pictorially, or by the spoken word, or by written invocation twirled in a wheel from which spiritual sustenance shall flow like flour from the revolving mill-stone, all methods are directed toward the same end.

Here the Buddha sits in a rectangular niche, his *padmāsana* resting on a brick plinth. Behind the figure is a plain square wall. Side walls support a black-tiled pent roof covering a light, red, timber framing, and forming a canopy. The green ridge-tiles have grotesque bird-head terminals, resembling those on the heavenly mansion in plate XXVIII. From the centre of the ridge rises a small spherical dome, supporting a pyramid of buff (gold) umbrellas, crowned with a *triśūla*, to which are attached two animated banners of Chinese type. A number of silk banners exactly similar to these, but many finely painted, were found by Stein in one of the Caves of the Thousand Buddhas at Tun-huang. They are cleverly designed to adapt themselves to the direction of the wind, and with their stiffening rods at head and foot retain their form, while the auxiliary streamers flutter freely.[1] The colours used in these banners are dark red, green, grey, and yellow.

The robe of the Buddha is rich red, and the under-garment grey, bordered with red and white. The bricks are buff with black pointing.

The execution is sketchy, and the drawing simplified for quick and easy repetition by hands indifferently skilled.

[1] See *Serindia*, vol. IV, plates LXXX, LXXXII.

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PLATE XIV

PAINTING FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. iii. C–F

FROM the north-west wall of corridor. This fragmentary painting is part of one of a series, all designed after the same model, repeated many times, with slight variations, in the Bezeklik shrines. The central figure—the Buddha—ever expounding, is always attended by monks, *devatās* or Bodhisattvas, and others; but although the same formula is followed, each picture is doubtless intended to illustrate an incident recorded in the Birth Stories, although not always identifiable because of the absence of those figures which might provide the clue.

In the present example, there stands the Buddha, irradiated by gorgeous vesica and nimbus, expounding as usual, the right hand raised in *vitarka mudrā*, thumb against finger indicating the progress of the discourse. With slight downward inclination of the head, he seems to be addressing a donor, probably in obeisance at his feet. But the donor is missing. It will be seen that resting lightly on the upraised left hand of the Buddha is a length of some striped fabric. We are told that the Buddha received many gifts of garments from his worshippers, and this, doubtless, represents such a gift presented by the missing donor, who is being rewarded by the delivery of one of the Buddha's famous homilies. The fabric presented is of red-brown (saffron?) colour, striped with yellow.

The Buddha wears a red-brown robe over a grey under-robe, showing at his left breast. A jewelled garland hangs round the shoulders and crosses the front of the body. The links are alternately gold rosettes and lozenges, with a coloured bead at every joint, and a bead on each outer edge of every rosette. Rosettes and lozenges are chased and have coloured centre-jewels.

The field of nimbus and vesica is filled with zigzag bands of colour—red, grey, green, pink—in various tones with yellow dividing bands, surrounded by a yellow border with a scroll pattern in red. An outer zone of coral-like cloud-scrolls has the same colours as the zigzag field, but shaded from dark along the centre of each scroll to nearly white at the edges.

In the foreground, on the left, stands a *devatā* or Bodhisattva, in *añjali* pose, turned towards the centre. The face, damaged, is pale; the hair, grey, with top-knot and heavy tresses falling behind the shoulders, and studded with gold, voluted ornaments. The *mukuṭa* or tiara, tied with a white taenia, has a group of three gold

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rosettes at the centre and one over the ear, with pink and green leaves above the centre group. The field of the nimbus is red, surrounded by shaded green, white, crimson, and yellow. The elaborate costume, typical of this order of person, is unmistakably Indian, and consists of a dull red stole and a buff loin-cloth shaded with red and bordered with green. The skirt is dark red, and a white *kamarband*, with long ends tied in a bow, hangs down to the ankles. Round the hips is a gold-bordered belt, divided by transverse gold bars into sections, of which the alternate ones are red with gold central boss, and the others alternately grey and green. Below the belt is the *uru-dama* in loops of alternate red and grey, and red and green. A shaded grey sash, the ends loosely tied, floats in bi-symmetrical curves right and left. A double row of alternate red and chased gold sections forms the necklet; and a carcanet of gold rosettes with coloured beads adorns the breast. The bangles at the wrists are gold.

Above is a young monk, whose tanned face is almost all hacked away. He wears a bright red robe with green lining, and a yellow under-robe, showing at his breast. His nimbus is green, surrounded by shaded red, grey, and yellow.

At the top corner is part of a frieze, similar to that of Bez. v. F–H, plate xx. Below the frieze is an end of a white label, intended for an inscription, but blank.

On the right, level with the hands of the Buddha, is the top of the head of a young monk, with black hair, cut angularly in a point between the eyebrows and at the temples. His nimbus is green, encircled by red, grey, and yellow bands.

Above is a Vajrapāṇi, his upraised right hand flourishing a *vajra*, and the left, against his breast, holding a yak-tail fly-whisk. The demon face is very badly damaged. It is pale and shows a prominent, cleft chin with a small pointed tuft of beard on each prominence, and a fiercely brushed moustache. His angular eye-brows give a threatening expression, and his general bestial fierceness is empha-sized by the exaggerated masseter muscle, the large, pointed vulpine ears and red hair. As a wielder of the thunderbolt (*vajra*), he is appropriately clad in the trappings of a warrior. The Vajrapāṇi is a figure usually present in these compositions and a general description of his costume is given here to save repetition. Variations will be noted as they occur. A short tunic with tight sleeves reaching to the elbows and there finished with large green frills is worn under an elaborate cuirass with gorget. On each forearm is a close-fitting vambrace, with in some cases, an exten-sion covering the back of the hand, nearly to the knuckles. Reaching almost to the knees is a kilt, edged with a frill or ruche; and a loose, white loin-cloth (*dhotī*) is

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gathered below the knees into close-fitting jambes or leg guards trimmed round the ankles, with spreading, green frills, like those at the elbows, partly covering very elaborately worked shoes. In front of the body, at the midriff, is a rosette, held in place by four radiating bands, one down the centre from gorget to waist, one from the rosette to each shoulder, and one encircling the waist. A narrow, loose belt, which seems to reach only to the sides of the hips, where its ends are attached by large bows to stole-like drapery, hangs in front of the stomach, supporting a lunette formed of petal-shaped plates above, and a small apron or sporran below. From the shoulders hangs a mantle, its upper corners brought round to the front of the neck and tied. Ornaments comprise *mukuṭa*, ear-rings, armlets, bracelets, garters, and anklets. The armour is probably largely composed of plates of lacquered hide, like that of early China.

In the present plate, the lower part of the Vajrapāṇi is missing. The colouring is as follows: cloak, red; gorget, green with yellow edges; stomacher, grey; bands from midriff, red with yellow edges; upper arms, dark red-brown; vambraces, grey with gold borders and studs, and green jewelled bosses; elbow frills, green; belt, white; 'sporran', red with buff edges and centre and green frill; petal shapes above belt, red, with white and green bands below; large bow under left arm, dark red.

Of the next subject, divided from the first by a vertical band of cloud-flower, only one side is shown. The vesica border is of the cloud-flower type, with a small naturalistic calyx at the base of each flower. The ground of this border is brick-red, and the flowers are red with yellow calyx, and a green leaf at the top. The inner border has a red scroll on a buff ground. On the narrow white outer edge is an Uigur inscription, in black.

Of the three figures present, the lowest, a *devatā*, shows only part of the head and left side, turned towards the vesica. The nimbus is green, surrounded by shaded red, grey, and yellow. The face of the grey-haired, elderly monk just above is badly damaged. It has heavy supra-orbital prominences with secondary ridges above connected at the centre by a short convex line. His nose is rather long and pointed, the chin deeply cleft, and the masseter muscle emphasized. Chin and upper lip are darkened with grey. His rather fierce eye, below bushy grey eye-brows, is pale grey-blue with black pupil; and the white of the eye is shaded with grey. The gristly neck proclaims the aged ascetic. He wears a red robe with green border, and raises his left hand in *vitarka* pose. The type of nose and the blue

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eye suggest a foreigner, or Khotanese. At top is a young monk, both hands raised in *vitarka mudrā*. Although the face is damaged, it can be seen that the nose is long and fine, perhaps Semitic; and that his arched eyebrows meet. The hair, black and short, is trimmed into capricious, angular forms. His robe is red, and under-garment green. The nimbus is green, bordered with red, grey, and yellow.

On the right of the plate is a reproduction, to a larger scale (about a fourth of actual size), of that part of the Buddha in the picture, which survives. It shows more effectively than in the more reduced version, the confidence and freedom in the drawing of contour lines. This quality is well shown in the flowing lines of the hand and arm, and in the sweeping curves of face, neck, and breast. The small web, with fine cross-hatching, between thumb and finger is clearly visible. The mouth, slightly smiling, reveals the teeth; and it will be noticed that in drawing the fantastic little moustache, the harshness of the black lines is softened by grey under-lines. The same treatment is followed in drawing the eyebrows. Just visible is the scalloped line (red) where the hair meets the forehead. It is strange that while the forms of hand and facial features have been carefully studied, although obviously reduced to a formula, the ear has never received the same care; and, to say nothing of its exaggerated proportions, it is always rather wooden and artificial.

The unhesitating freedom of line is very noticeable, also, in the contouring of drapery folds, better seen in the full-length figures shown in other plates; and although the 'anatomy' of drapery is seldom understood, taking into account that these Bezeklik standing Buddha figures are greater than life-size, the command of the brush by the artisan is remarkable. At the same time, it would seem that small ornamental details, such as those in the haloes and garlands, were often entrusted to less skilled hands—probably young apprentices beginning their training.

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PLATE XV

PAINTING FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. iii. N–V

FROM the west wall of the corridor. It is the surviving portion of two subjects, similar in composition to those reproduced in several preceding plates, divided by a vertical band of repeating cloud-scroll flowers. The portion of the picture on the right is reproduced in colour, in plate XVI, and is described in the note on that plate.

It is not necessary to describe in full detail the subject on the left. The composition shows unimportant variations on those previously dealt with and the colouring follows generally the same scheme. Here, the field of the vesica behind the Buddha is composed of closely packed ribbon-like radiating petals, with the tips curled over to form a border. The colours are red, yellow, red, and green, repeating in this order, and each petal has a light midrib and edges. The outer border of zigzag bands of colour is similar to the field of the vesica in Bez. iii. S–U, in plate XVIII.

The right hand of the Buddha, raised in *vitarka mudrā*, is well and delicately drawn and shows clearly the web between thumb and first finger. The Vajrapāṇi on the left is not in his usual place at the top, and he does not appear to be armed with the *vajra*. Of the two monks on the right, the younger has his black hair trimmed in sharp angles. The other is much older, has bushy eyebrows, and his dark grey hair is disposed in curves. A difference in the ears is also noticeable; and although each wears a red (saffron?) robe, that of the elder is differentiated by being barred with green.

The wig-like hair of the *devatā* just below the older monk is grey, outlined against the face with bright red. It appears to be plaited, with a lozenge-shaped gold stud at each twist.

Every face in this picture seems to have been damaged deliberately.

The lower part, which showed donors with camel, mule, and horse, is probably in Berlin, and is described in Grünwedel's *Altbuddhistische Kultstätten in Chinesisch-Turkistan.*

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PLATE XVI

PAINTINGS FROM BEZEKLIK

THE reproductions in this plate are from portions of the paintings recovered from the west wall of the corridor surrounding the cella of the shrine. They are good examples of the richness of colour used in these temple paintings. The designs follow a regular scheme of composition, varying in detail in accordance with the requirements of the incidents in the lives of successive Buddhas portrayed. The excellent condition of the surviving portions of the pictures, apart from that which appears to be due to wanton destruction or decay of the structure of the building, may be partly attributable to their immunity from misguided attempts at 'preservation'.

Bez. iii. N, O

The subject here is the meeting of the Dīpankara Buddha with the Brāhman Sumedhu, who, four *asankhyeyas* and a hundred thousand cycles ago (an incalculable period), lived in Amarāvatī. He was of good family on both sides, and inherited great wealth from his parents; but deeming the possession of worldly riches an obstacle in his progress towards his earnestly desired goal of moral and spiritual perfection, he gave them all away; and seeking the solitude of the forest, near the city of Ramma, embraced the life of an ascetic.

At this time the Buddha, Dīpankara, appeared in the world and in his wanderings reached the city of Ramma, and took up residence in the neighbouring monastery of Sudassana. There the people of Ramma thronged to see and hear him, bearing garlands and many other offerings. After hearing him preach they invited him to visit the city. Their invitation being accepted, preparations were put in hand to render the road fit for the progress of the Buddha. Sumedhu, becoming aware of these unwonted activities, asked the reason, and upon being told requested that he might be given a section of the road to repair. The condition must have been deplorable, for before he could finish his task, even with the help given him by a hundred thousand miracle-working saints, Dīpankara came in sight. Whereupon Sumedhu decided that he could not allow the Buddha to walk on the unfinished part, and at the risk of sacrificing his life, he cast himself upon the miry ground and spreading his hermit's mantle and his roll of matted hair, formed a bridge for the Buddha and his following of four hundred thousand saints

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to walk upon. In spite of this press of traffic he survived, and when the Dīpankara reached the spot and beheld the pious act of Sumedhu he stopped and prophesied that at four *asankhyeyas* and one hundred thousand cycles from that time, he, Sumedhu, would become a Buddha named Gautama. To us this would seem a rather excessive period to await the fulfilment of an ambition, but it satisfied Sumedhu and confirmed his belief in himself as to his destiny. Then Dīpankara, having praised Sumedhu, made him an offering of eight handfuls of flowers, and departed.

The evidence for the identification of this picture with the legend may not, at first, be apparent. It will be seen that just below the feet of the Buddha is a snake-like object. This is Sumedhu's hair. In the prostrate position necessary to bring the hair here, Sumedhu would have his head on the ground and would support himself on both hands. This would bring his elbows, crooked, near his head, and at the extreme edge of the picture his right elbow does, actually, appear. The legend tells of offerings of flowers and garlands made to Dīpankara, and that he wore the garlands is shown by the loop and tassels seen hanging against his red robe and at his sides. So, it may be assumed that such temporary ornaments, bestowed by adoring worshippers as symbols of love and devotion, are permissible and do not infringe the principle of renunciation of personal decorative gewgaws.

The figure on the left dressed as a *devatā*, in the act of strewing flowers, is finely designed although rather short in stature, and shows clearly all details of the elaborate garments and jewellery of these celestial beings found in constant attendance. A *devatā* with wig-like hair is above. At the top, left, is perhaps a *Vajra-pāṇi* but without the *vajra*. His highly decorative right shoe and most of his garments closely resemble those worn by the princely figure in Bez. iii. W–Y in this plate.

There is in this, as in most of the Bezeklik pictures, recognizable Chinese influence, especially marked in the drawing and colour treatment of the flowers. In the repeating floral design of the border on the left, the scrolling of the forms and a gentle swaying or drifting impression expressed, like the movement of a flame, is a treatment characteristically Chinese. The manner of disposal of the colours in flowers or other ornament is precisely that of Chinese silk embroidery, that is, in definite masses or bands of unbroken colour, with proper understanding of the value of juxtaposition of hues and of the use of thin lines in contouring and blending without degrading the colours. In these greatly reduced reproductions it

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is difficult to show all the technical details of procedure such as, for instance, the red line along the edge of the black hair to soften the harshness of contrast with the flesh. The eyebrows, although seeming to be drawn in one line, have, often, two other lines under the black, one pale red and one grey or blue, both rather broader than the final black, and so appearing on each side of it, softening its sharpness.

Bez. iii. W–Y

This comes from the south-west end of the corridor, all the left-hand side being missing excepting a small piece at the top. The Buddha stands in a teaching or arguing pose (*vitarka-mudrā*), each foot resting on a separate lotus. His head is inclined slightly downwards, as he seems to address the regal person kneeling on one knee before him. The hair, dull blue, has a small white jewel, outlined with red, at the base of the tall *uṣnīṣa*. He wears the usual costume and a long garland of a pattern different from that in Bez. iii. N, O. The field of the vesica, green, is plain, as is that of the red nimbus, but both are richly bordered. The broad outer border is peculiar, consisting of the repetition of a wing-like form made up of rows of petal-like feathers in a changing arrangement of colours delicately contoured with white. The treatment of the colours in definite bands is Chinese, but the wing form suggests Sasanian derivation. Similar wings were worn on the helmets of Sasanian monarchs, as shown in coins and in the rock sculptures of Persia. They occur also on the heads of persons in the crowd of mourners in Bez. xi. A–C, plate xx, who have a distinctly Persian appearance.

On the chocolate-colour ground of the border, in the spaces between the wings, there are little bright red flame-palmettes outlined with white.

Unlike the Gandhāra and Ajanta representations of the Buddha, most of those of Bezeklik wear sandals, as here. Delightfully drawn, as are the lotuses under the feet, they show slight regard for nature.

The kneeling figure in warrior's dress may be a donor or one of the many persons of rank and wealth that followed the Master. The female behind him is perhaps the warrior's consort. Both are gorgeously dressed and the details of their costumes are very interesting. The ornate shoes of the man have been referred to under Bez. iii. N, O, and there is a very strange type of footgear worn by the consort, visible just to the right of the warrior's left elbow. It presents a kind of imbricated pattern in red on a white ground, and may be a form of plaiting or quilting. The same material is worn by the Ḍākinī figure, Bez. v. I, plate xxi.

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Akin to this is the material of the sleeves, in which the red lines are certainly not intended to be a stylized rendering of folds. The same sleeves are found again on the Ḍākinīs in plates XX and XXI. The gorget of the warrior, like that of his consort, is also worn by the Ḍākinīs and by the Vajrapāṇi, who figures in several of the pictures. It resembles the lacquered leather armour so highly developed by the Chinese and Japanese, bordered perhaps with chased gold or some gilded metal. In the highly complicated trappings of the various figures there is much to interest the student of costume.

Above the donor and his consort are two *devatās*, the uppermost of tanned complexion in which there are pronounced attempts to express *chiaroscuro*. The other complexions are fair. At the top left is part of the head of a grey-haired Vajrapāṇi and a celestial pavilion on a paved terrace surrounded by a courtyard enclosed within battlemented walls, with a wide gateway, wooden-framed but lacking gates. In the courtyard are at least four horses, one with a red mane, another whose mane is grey, and a third wearing a halter. Perhaps steeds for the chariot of the sun-god Sūrya.

Bez. iii. Aa

This interesting fragment, the upper left corner of a large painting, comes from the south-west angle of the outer side of the cella wall. The border is similar to that of N, O. The small Chinese pavilion is the usual timber-framed structure with plastered walls and fine, tiled roof displaying bold grotesque bird terminals, their long, bifurcated tail feathers, curled at the ends, covering the gable eaves. A flaming jewel rises from the centre of the ridge and on the gable is the Chinese character 天 *t'ien* (heaven); but there is no visible entrance to the building.

The celestial musician whose head appears to the right is playing a kind of flageolet, two middle fingers of the left hand being pressed over two of the 'notes'. Long bands from the white taenia, caught by the breezes of the celestial heights, wave above the head. It is a pity that this charming little piece is so badly damaged by mud and exposure.

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PLATE XVII

PAINTINGS FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. iii. G–K

FROM the western outer wall of cella. The Buddha, with vesica and nimbus, stands with head inclined to the left, his right hand uplifted in *vitarka-mudrā*, and the left hanging down, lightly grasping a fold of his robe. The subject is that so often repeated in the Bezeklik shrines—the Buddha teaching, attended by *devatās* or Bodhisattvas and monks.

This picture, besides having lost large portions on both sides of the central figure (probably removed by German archaeologists) has suffered from exposure to weather at its upper part.

The features of the Buddha, excepting the chin and portions of the mouth and left eye, are destroyed. Small, even, white teeth, outlined with grey, can be seen at the surviving corner of the mouth, and the end of a fantastically scrolled moustache. Other details resemble many of those of Bez. iii. S–U, plate XVIII. The hair is dull blue, outlined on the forehead with a red, scalloped edge. An under-garment, visible at the waist, is yellow with a red scroll border. Two long ends of the jewelled garland hang right and left, each terminating in a tassel (that to the right is missing). Each foot, sandal-shod, rests on a lotus with green seed-table, surrounded by a whorl of pointed petals, shaded pink.

As in all of this type of Bezeklik composition, the vesica and nimbus are highly decorative. Here, on a green background, are Chinese coral-like flames in red, surrounded by white and grey bands, then a band of red, bearing grey rosettes. An outer border of prismatic zigzags is divided into wing-shape masses (recalling the corresponding border in Bez. iii. W–Y, plate XVI) against a dark brown background. At the base of each wing-shape palmette, and resting on the inner, yellow edge of the band, is a large white disk; and between the palmettes, on the brown background, are smaller disks or pearls.

The lotuses supporting the Buddha's feet rest on a raft with a golden deck, the red frame fitted with golden ferrules and bands at the projecting ends. The raft, which seems to bend under the supported load, floats on the swirling green water of a stream running between green banks, of which only that on the left remains. This is conventionally treated, with black grass tufts and contour lines curving

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downwards towards the water to convey the idea of undulating slopes; and with eroded edges, red, to suggest earth.

To the left of the Buddha, and kneeling on the bank, is a donor whose right hand, offering a golden dish containing fruit or flowers, is only partly visible. Near to the hand is the knee of perhaps another figure wearing a green tunic bordered with pink, edged with yellow, and below, a red skirt. All but these fragments of the figures is missing, and may be probably found in Berlin.

At top left is a *devatā* in devotional attitude, looking towards the Buddha. This figure and the monk beside it are faded and damaged by water, which had filtered through from the roof.

On the right of the picture is another monk, his face turned away from the centre and his left hand in *vitarka-mudrā* in imitation of the gesture of the Buddha. Over his left shoulder hangs a tassel at the end of a buff and white cord. His ears are normal, but those of the monk on the left are elongated and deeply slit. This difference may mark different orders.

On the extreme right a second *devatā*, with folded hands, looks towards the centre.

The greenish-buff background of the picture is relieved by scattered flowers and leaves and the side borders are enriched with repeating 'cloud' flowers, as in Bez. iii. Aa, plate XVI.

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PLATE XVIII

PAINTINGS FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. iii. S–U

FROM the south-west corner of the outer west wall of the cella. The Buddha figure, with elaborate vesica and nimbus, stands with each foot on a separate lotus, his left hand raised in *vitarka-mudrā* and the right resting lightly on the loop of his garland. His heavy-lidded eyes are rather downcast with eyebrows drawn each in a single black line over red, meeting in the centre and the red continuing downwards to contour the nose. There is no outline to the lower lid but the whites of the eyes were painted white. A small moustache is shown as a fancifully scrolled thin black line painted over a slightly broader grey one. On the forehead is a small red circular *tilaka*. The grey-black hair has a closely scalloped edge of red next the forehead, and a high basin-shaped *uṣnīṣa* with a small fan-shaped jewel at its base. The shading colour of the pale flesh has faded away.

Between thumb and first finger of the left hand a small web is indicated, criss-crossed with red to give it the texture of the web between the toes of a goose. Although this is claimed to be one of the distinguishing attributes of the Buddha, it probably owes its origin to a popular misinterpretation of the occurrence in sculpture of the strengthening web of stone or stucco, reserved by the sculptor as a safeguard against the accidental breaking of spread fingers.

Robe and under-garments are of the regulation kind, and the garland here is very fine. Between the elaborate links composed of golden disks, triple leaves, and jewels are connecting strings of small beads. Details of the tassel are more clearly visible in plates XVII and XXII.

Vesica and nimbus have outer borders of repeating Chinese cloud scrolls, and the field, painted with long zigzag bands of changing colours, producing something of the effect of oil on water, indicates the effulgent prismatic rays of light that streamed with dazzling brilliancy from the Master's body.

The lotus flowers under the feet have little resemblance to reality, but, in common with most of these blossoms in Bezeklik paintings, they are a composite invention of Chinese inspiration. The shading of the petals has the quality of embroidery, to which reference has already been made.[1] But whether the painter borrowed the treatment from the embroiderer or vice versa is not determinable.

[1] See p. 64.

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In the foreground, the kneeling figure offering, on outstretched hands, an imposing censer seems to be a person of distinction belonging to some non-Buddhist religious order. His costume seems to consist of three garments; one, buff or yellow with long sleeves; a cloak of dull vermilion, banded with yellow reaching almost to the knees, the green lining showing at the lower edge falling from the two forearms and at the left knee; and an under-robe of dull carmine (an unusual colour in these pictures) showing at the right breast, over the right forearm, and covering the knees. He has thick eyebrows and ears of normal length. Shading of the flesh has faded, but there is a slight greyness on the shaven chin. Above and behind are two *devatās*, one almost entirely broken away. The other, partly hidden by the vesica of the Buddha, turns to signal with the hands the progress of the discourse. The gracefully dressed hair, outlined with red against the forehead, is adorned with an elaborate *mukuṭa* (tiara), from which flowing white ribbons seem to be animated by the wind. Of the two monks above, one is elderly, rather bald, with bushy greying eyebrows, like those of the kneeling figure, and a nose that projects more abruptly than usual. From his costume, very similar to that of the kneeling donor, he probably belongs to the same order; and the rosary round his neck with pendent cross suggests that he may be a Christian or Manichaean, and from the type of features, a foreigner. The pose of the hands indicates that he is following the points of the sermon. The other, a younger monk, his hands in the *añjali* pose, wears a Buddhist robe. The finger- and toe-nails of all the figures are pointed.

The general background is slate-grey with scattered red flowers and green leaves, and the border to right has repeating 'cloud' flowers.

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PLATE XIX

PAINTINGS FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. iii. A, B

THIS is a continuation of the series of pictures, on the same wall as Bez. iii. C–F, in plate XIV, in each of which the standing Buddha is the central figure. The Buddha figure between C and B is missing; only the sides of the haloes remain. Continuing from this hiatus, to the right of the vesica, in the foreground, is an important personage of regal aspect, possibly a Śākya prince, who has decided to follow the Buddha and is seated in Western fashion on a low stool. His hands are folded reverently, and with head inclined towards the Buddha his face expresses a dreamy ecstasy, mingled with some speculation, as he submits to the sacrifice of his luxuriant hair, still, for a brief period, spreading in thick masses behind his shoulders. The long, slit lobes of his ears carry gold rosettes from which hang bunches of five coloured beads, and his necklet is of chased gold and red in alternate sections, with red and green beads. The armlets are red-brown, with gold edges and studs, a boss with green jewel on the outer side of each, and a green leaf-shape palmette above, in front. The three golden double bangles have a green palmette rising from the highest on each forearm. His elaborate clothing consists of an *upavīta*, saffron colour, with a green pleat; a saffron stole; buff loin-cloth with green border; and a brown-pink skirt. The end of a buff girdle hangs between his knees. The stool, or *āsana*, on which he sits is green on top, and the frame brick-red with yellow edges and studs. Below the top of the frame is a band of green scroll-work on white, and the same at the bottom edge of the picture. Two vertical bands of the same pattern suggest short legs of the stool. Near the bottom of the picture is a row of alternate brick-red and green rectangles. The flowing lines of the drapery, although excessive, effectively develop the form of the figure; and while expressing more exuberance on the part of the painter than care for truth of detail in the drawing, give animated contrast to the resigned tranquillity of the person involved.

Behind the seated figure stands the barber-monk Upali, perhaps sent by King Suddhodana, the Buddha's uncle, to perform the solemn head-shaving rite. The razor, of Chinese pattern, held in his right hand is urged forward by his left; and as it is advanced, locks of hair fall in front of the face and neck of the prince. The pose of the barber's hands expresses the sureness and elegant delicacy of his touch,

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confirming the reputation for skill enjoyed by Indian barbers. He wears a red-brown robe with green borders, and a green stole over his left shoulder, but no ornaments. The damage to his face spoils that which appears to be a good piece of characterization. The halo he wears invests him with a saintly standing.

Behind and above the barber is an older monk, with heavy, superorbital ridges meeting above his nose. A small eminence between the ridges is indicated by a short convex line. His eyebrows and eyes are similar to those of the elderly figure in plate XIV. The mouth is delicately curved, and the chin, rather prominent, is darkened with brown, as is the upper lip, to suggest shaven surfaces. Although partly bald, the hair at the sides of the head is brown. The field of his nimbus is green, surrounded by red, dark buff, and yellow. His robe is similar to that of the barber, but with a yellow stole over his shoulder. All three of these figures show considerable skill in characterization.

At the top is a Vajrapāṇi with *vajra* and fly-whisk. His wide, animal mouth, grinning, shows its row of upper teeth, with tushes at the corners. The prominent, cleft chin has no beard, but the heavy moustaches are brushed out fiercely; and his hair, long and lank, streams out behind his shoulders and rises in a flame-shape top-knot. The *mukuṭa* or tiara is composed of a group of three gold bosses at the centre, a gold boss at each side, and a red and green palmette above. Each ear-ring carries a gold boss with a bunch of coloured beads attached. His costume is of the same character as that of the Vajrapāṇi in plate XIV. The *vajra*, diamond shaped, is coloured red, green, and gold.

The third subject, divided from the last by a vertical band of 'cloud' flower ornament, shows three figures to the left of a large vesica, the outer border decorated with a repeating bunch of wavy flames in various bright colours, pointed, and directed outward and upward. The lowest figure, an interesting one, is that of a standing Brahman, turned towards the vesica. Owing to damage at the middle of the figure, the action of the hands cannot be fully understood. That of the right hand is quite uncertain, and that of the left, with palm outwards, thumb and index finger directed downwards, and the other three fingers flexed upwards, is not very clear. Across the left wrist hangs part of a tiger skin which appears again beside the right thigh, and may be intended as a gift for the Buddha. The donor's face is that of a mature, bearded man, probably of northern Indian race. His hair is dull blue, wavy across the forehead and decorated with a row of red volutes. His slightly oblique eyes are long and heavy lidded. His angular eyebrows, blue like the hair and beard,

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rise sharply from a frowning fold above the nose, giving a rather irascible expression, to which the nervous, fleshy wing of the well-shaped nose contributes. The full moustache and forked beard seem to combine, and from them long strands are carried up the sides of the face, over the ears, to meet the hair falling behind the shoulders—a habit observed among modern Sikhs. A large gold ring with a group of coloured beads hangs from the exaggerated hole in the lobe of the ear.

The costume, down to the hips, seeming inappropriate to a man with this type of face, resembles the effeminate fashion of the standing *devatā* or Bodhisattva in plate XIV. But below the hips, and just above the knees, there seem to be the legs of red-brown *caleçons*, with green borders; and on the calves are the curious, abbreviated fur gaiters such as are worn by the troop of Khotanese (?) musicians and the diminutive donor in plate XXVII, who also wear *caleçons*. Then, at the ankles, the effeminate reasserts itself in coquettish anklets.

Next, above, is a monk with folded hands. His short-cropped hair is pale grey-brown. He wears the usual red-brown robe, green bordered, and a yellow stole over his left shoulder. His nimbus is red.

At the top is an elderly man, of the *sādhu* type, with large eyes and nose, heavy brows, bushy eyebrows, large, fierce moustache, and ample beard. Bald on the top, his grey hair at the sides is strained back and tied in a knob at the back of the head. He has pale-grey eyes. In his right hand he holds a tazza at his breast. The bare left arm, on which the anatomical structure is strongly and inaccurately indicated, is raised high as he seems to signal with his fingers the points of the discourse presumably being delivered by the (missing) Buddha. Round his neck is a necklet of grey and gold sections, hung with green and grey beads; at his ears are the usual elaborate ornaments. The corners of a brown cape with green lining are tied in a bow at his chest. His nimbus is green, surrounded by red and yellow.

On the narrow borders of the vertical floral band, and on other parts of the picture, are inscriptions in cursive Uigur. The general background, faded to green-grey, is powdered in suitable places with falling flowers and leaves.

Bez. iv. D

This fragment from the north-east corner of the ambulatory is part of a standing Vajrapāṇi and although very ignorantly drawn gives some interesting details of costume. Standing with shoulders thrown over slightly to the left, he seems to look upward, to the right. The arm, bent towards the front, thumb and forefinger of the

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hand daintily posed, just touches the extreme end of the *vajra*, which seems to float unsupported. The *vajra* has two lozenge-shaped limbs meeting in a central boss, each point of the lozenges bearing a round knob or pearl. A general description of the Vajrapāṇi costume is given in the note on Bez. iii. C–F in plate XIV, but a few variations and additions here may be noted. There are two different types of mail; that on the upper arm is probably meant to represent chain-mail, and that of the skirt of the tunic scale armour in three horizontal bands, the scales overlapping vertically and laced to a leather lining. The edge of 'hem' of the skirt is probably the ruched end of the lining. Scale armour covers the upper side of the forearm. The leggings, into which the legs of the *paijāmas* are tucked, are probably of lacquered hide, and long frills issuing from below cover the ankles. The decorated boots are carelessly drawn. A long cloak, hanging in pointed folds down to the ankles, is supported on the shoulders and held there by bands tied in a bow at the neck. Over the arm falls a narrow stole. All draperies show disregard of structure, and ignorance or carelessness pervades the whole of the drawing. The colouring, bright and lively, is as follows: Gorget, grey with gold ornamental border. Tunic, green. Rosette at midriff, supported by yellow and pink radiating bands. Kilt of scale armour, yellow with green transverse bands and green pleats (ruche) at its lower edge. Upper arm, red with a gold armlet. Elbow-frill, green. Forearm and bangles, gold. The belt is supported at its ends by a white band, tied in a large bow. Lunette above the belt has a yellow centre surrounded by shaded pink and green bands and a pink, petal-like border. The 'sporran' has a dark red centre, bordered by vermilion, white, shaded pink and outer, green, pleats. *Paijāmas*, white. Greaves, yellow in front with a large pink floral boss surrounded by green on each calf; between boss and front, red. Anklets, yellow, and spreading ankle-frills, green. The shoes are in two shades of red. Cloak and stole, red. *Vajra*, gold. The lotus under the feet has a green centre (seed table) and petals with red centres bordered with grey and white.

The flesh, *vajra*, and bangles are outlined red. Other contours are black, and the background is grey.

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PLATE XX

PAINTINGS FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. xi. A–C

On the end wall of this shrine was a painting of the Parinirvāṇa with a crowd of mourners gathered round the recumbent body of the Buddha. The part here reproduced shows a group of monarchs or chiefs among those assembled on this grievous occasion. Only a small portion of the halo border surrounding the body survives in the picture and the body itself is missing. The surface of the picture has suffered badly from streams of liquid mud washed down from the broken roof, and although much of it has been cleared away it was found inadvisable to attempt further cleaning because of the risk of disturbing the paint below. Many details remain obscured or indistinct which might have helped in determining the nationality of the mourners. The artist has given careful attention to physiognomy and head-dress in his desire to demonstrate the importance and solemnity of an event which drew the representatives of so many nations to join in the universal lamentation at the scene of the calamity; and the identification of the individual types presents an interesting task.

At the left is a Dharmapāla with wide staring eyes, distinguished by a nimbus. On his immediate left is, presumably, an Arab, with red complexion, green eyes, and large nose; his mouth open giving voice to his overwhelming grief so eloquently rendered by his expression. Above is a Chinese dignitary wearing the head-dress of a judge, and directly below is another Chinese with a broad-brimmed conical hat like that worn by one of the pilgrims in the group to the left at the lower part of Bez. xiv, plate XXXI. A curiously broad face is that of the elderly man in a loosely tied white *pagṛī*, and beside him is an unmistakable Persian with grotesquely long and bulbous nose, flowing moustaches, full beard, carefully trimmed, gazing in wide-eyed wonderment. He and another near the bottom of the fragment, wear the typical wing-shape Persian hat, kept in position by a chin-strap. A Sasanian crown is worn by the person with long black curls, in front of the second Persian, and this is also secured by a chin-strap. Rising from the middle of this crown is a flaming jewel, its tip partly covering the chin of the face behind. At the lower corner of the picture is a man wearing a hat of rather Chinese type, with chin-strap. His long face has peculiar eyes, in that they slope in the reverse direction to those of the Mongol. Screening his chin is a conical cap resembling the type

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worn by hill men of the north-west. In the extreme lower corner is the bald head of an elderly man, his face broken away below his nose.

The common grief experienced by this assembly finds expression in each individual according to his nature. The Arab's face is sodden with weeping, and the person to his left, behind the conical-hatted Chinese, is in a condition of sobbing and sniffing. Others are under better control, and, while realizing the greatness of their loss, are less demonstrative in showing their feelings.

Bez. v. F–H

These two *ḍākinī* figures, similar to and from the same shrine as those numbered Bez. v. A–E on plate XXI, were on the wall opposite and were therefore looking in the same direction, that is, towards the cult figure at the inner end of the shrine. The snout only of the fish *vāhana* of one of these is saved but doubtless the other was similarly mounted. All the faces seem to have been deliberately damaged.

The description of the *ḍākinīs* on plate XXI applies to these with slight variations in colouring, details of costume, positions of emblems, and the interesting caste marks on the faces.

At the top of the wall is a frieze representing elaborate festoons of drapery edged with silver guttae, and above is part of the vaulted ceiling decorated with a green border and large rosettes on a grey ground.

The unhesitating freedom in the drawing of the long contour lines, especially those of the fluttering ribbons, is evidence of the painter's technical ability. A minute inscription near the lower edge of the picture, just to the right of the hip of the figure on the left, may be a signature; and if it looks like 'Jack Jones', such a reading, in the absence of any historical warrant, is not permissible! The characters are doubtless Oriental, but too indistinct in this reproduction to recognize.

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PLATE XXI

PAINTINGS FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. v. A–E

FROM the south wall of the long narrow shrine adjoining the larger shrine on its north. Although these animated figures are creations inspired by a degenerate form of Mahāyāna Buddhism, they are highly decorative. Charming in their supple swaying forms they carry symbols of threatening import sanctioned by the repulsive ritual of Tantric philosophy, which professes to advance the aspirant towards the ultimate goal of perfect peace, or, more correctly, torpidity. These female fiends—*ḍākinīs*—endowed with four arms and four heads, and equipped with appropriate means, seek to capture the individual and, it is claimed, to subjugate his natural evil impulses by encouraging and promoting their practice to the excess that ends in exhaustion. Whence this peculiar and insidious philosophy came, or whether its inspiration may derive from remote forms of belief in spells and charms and from ungoverned, primitive human lusts, is uncertain. Whatever its origin, it became a powerful influence on Mahāyāna Buddhism in about the seventh century A.D.

The implements of their mission, so spiritedly displayed, are the noose (*pāśa*) with which to capture their quarry, the sacrificial knife (*kaḍga*) for sanguinary ceremonies, the skull (*kapāla*) to be used as a cup for blood, and the thunderbolt (*vajra*) which has complicated significance. Besides the four arms, the *ḍākinīs* are endowed with four heads. At first sight, the expression of the principal face would seem disarmingly simple, but for the hard, cruel tilt of the eyebrows which prompts detection of further and less pleasant implications in the features. The subsidiary faces appear to express either mild surprise or alarm or malevolence. All the faces have been wantonly damaged.

The costume is an effeminate adaptation of that of the warrior guardians—*dharmapāla*. The long, streaming scarves lend animation, accentuating the suggestion of brisk breezes induced by the forward progress of the plunging fish *vāhana*, to which the backward leaning of the shoulders, advanced hips, and swaying skirt add realism. The peculiar imbricated treatment of the sleeves covering the forearms has already been noticed in connexion with Bez. iii. W–Y, plate XVI, and also the scaly character of the foot-covering appearing in Bez. v. I on the present plate. They may have implications associated with the fish; but of the fish as a *vāhana*

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no explanation has, so far, been found. Fish—*matsya*—is one of the five elements or *ms* involved in the *Śakti* ritual, preliminary to attainment of freedom from passion; and in Bengal, the *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* recommends for sacrificial purposes three kinds of fish said to be characteristic of that region (Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, vol. ii, p. 278 n.).

The general colour scheme is similar to that in plate xx, but a few details of the costumes on this plate may be noted. The gorgets are quilted green within the yellow (gold) scrolled borders. The loin-cloth of the centre and right-hand figures is chequered with double lines and dots, red on buff. On the flowing ends of their lower stoles are flat, silver tags. The close-fitting tunic of the *ḍākinī* on the left is red-brown, that of the centre grey, and that of the third brick-red.

Bez. v. I

This fragment of a *ḍākinī* figure from the north wall of the shrine is similar to the others on the plate, but not so well proportioned, and, like those, is progressing towards the cult figure at the west end of the cella. Of emblems the *vajra* alone is visible, the lower end resting on the fish.

She is dressed in green, with a jewelled girdle partly covered by a white kamarband tied in a butterfly bow from which a long pleat hangs down to the level of the ankles. Her *dhotī* is yellow shaded with red and bordered with green, resembling that of the *ḍākinī*-like figure in Bez. iii. W–Y on plate xvi. The bright red skirt is contoured with white, as is also the grey sash round the hips. From the green elbow frill the arm is covered with a dull pink sleeve. The boots are yellow, figured with red. The upper side of the fish is green and the under side yellow.

Bez. x. G–H

The whole of the vaulted roof was covered with a diaper of these seated Buddha figures. The work is rough and perfunctory; the drawing, especially of the drapery, very stylized and crude. The flesh is pale with black outlines; the hair grey against pink nimbi bordered with green and buff. The robes are pinkish-red outlined with dark red, and the under robes are grey bordered with pink. The vesicas are alternately white with grey rays and pale green with green rays, surrounded by shaded pink and buff. *Padmāsanas* are alternately shaded grey and shaded purple-pink, with green centres. The background is light brick-red, with flowers coloured like the *padmāsanas*.

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PLATE XXII

PAINTINGS FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. v. J, K

FROM the left jamb of the entrance to the cella of the shrine. This fragment shows the lower part of a very ornate Buddha or Bodhisattva standing on a lotus, to whom a scantily clad man kneels in supplicating pose. The 'Buddha' is, as usual in the Bezeklik paintings, dressed in three robes; but unlike most of the examples, two of the robes are trimmed with borders of contrasting colours, and the treatment of the pleats in the upper robe is affected and over-elaborated. An unusual feature is the stiff, white pleat of the waist girdle (*izārband*) hanging from below the edge of the upper robe. Garlands of elaborate design are looped about the figure, the links in the form of a lotus, alternately yellow and green. Gold rosettes and pendent strings of beads occur at certain points, at the two large loops in front and at free ends swinging to the left of the figure, carrying large, composite tassels. From the right hand of the figure hangs a rosary of green beads. One of the monks on plate XVIII wears a rosary of black beads round his neck, carrying a pendent cross. In the present case in place of the cross is a *vajra*.

Although in this figure there is a general resemblance to the Buddha of these Bezeklik shrines, the exceptional features described give rise to some doubt as to the identity of the present example; and the doubt is strengthened by the position it occupied on the jamb of the entrance—an unlikely place for the Buddha. Further, there seems to be no representation of the Buddha carrying or wearing a rosary. But the rosary is one of the symbols associated with the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, as is also the *vajra*. The kneeling man has not the appearance of a donor; he seems to be supplicating; and as the chief concern of Avalokiteśvara is to comfort the afflicted and to obtain clemency for the transgressor, there is a probability that he is the deity represented here.

The supplicating figure, with arms raised imploringly towards the Bodhisattva, although scantily clad, is rich in jewels. A kind of red *jānghiyā*, supported by a knotted girdle, is drawn between the legs of the green *caleçons* which clothe the thighs. A gold rosette at the midriff is surrounded by six large beads, which form the end links of radiating bead chains holding the rosette in position, one of the chains being carried round the hips. Armlets and bangles adorn the arms. Round the calf of the leg is the queer abbreviated fur gaiter, such as those worn by the musicians in plate XXVII; and

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at the ankles are the fanciful tops of what appear to be soft leather boots, bound round the ankle by green straps. The indication of the kneecap is a concession to convention, disregarding anatomical accuracy.

Bez. v. Flooring

In several shrines a part of the floor of the cella, usually before the base of the altar or cult figure, was painted. To protect the surface from destruction by the abrading action of the bare feet of persons approaching, the surface was treated with some kind of resistant medium, such as wax or varnish. Such portions have been erroneously described by some archaeologists as *buon fresco*. Actually the painting is *tempera*.

The fragment here represented is of this kind. Its exact position in the shrine has, unfortunately, not been recorded.

Badly broken and damaged, probably by the impact of roughly shod infidel feet, and discoloured by the protective varnish, full recognition of the subject is rendered impossible. It represents a tank of agitated water swirling about various types of sacred jewels (*cintāmaṇi*), of which two, laminated, float buoy-like in the lower right corner. Above, is the nude infantile figure of a plump boy, vigorously disporting himself. He seems to plunge forward with right arm outstretched, holding in his hand a bunch of flowers. His left arm, akimbo, may be grasping an end of a narrow stole, blown by the breeze into an arching loop above his head. His features are Mongolian and his head is clean-shaven, save for reserved black tufts of which two are visible. At his breast he wears a jewelled carcanet.

Bez. iii. Ceiling and friezes

From the corridor at the back of the shrine. The scheme of decoration of the ceiling consists of a repeating circular rosette of elaborate design, having a pink lotus at the centre. Complete rosettes occur along the centre line of the ceiling, and between them, in zigzag order, half-rosettes, one on each side, their diameters coinciding with the edges of the ceiling. Simple scrolls of Chinese character cover the background between the circles.

The two friezes, representing festooned drapery and jewels hanging from a narrow vandyked and pleated border, are from the top of the walls supporting the ceiling, and resemble those in plates XII and XX.

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PLATE XXIII

PAINTINGS FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. iv. A–C

THIS comes from the back of the altar or cult figure in the cella. It is a fragment of wall surface, enriched by a diapered arrangement of rectangles containing seated Buddha figures in varied colourings, and, at the top, a frieze consisting of three horizontal bands of ornament.

The top band of the frieze suggests a cornice decorated with a stylized acanthus leaf motive, running horizontally, with the midrib on the central line and the sides of the leaf folded over to meet, forming a sort of flattened sheath. The leaf is shaded and high lights are added on the edges of the serrations. This motive is repeated in alternate blue and purple-brown colouring, a chevron band dividing the repeats. It has a Sasanian character and occurs, slightly modified, in medieval illuminated manuscripts of the West.

The next band represents a row of mutules, drawn in perspective. The end face of each mutule is ornamented with three little disks, the centre green and the others red, enclosed in a rectangle. The under surface is divided longitudinally, half grey and half brown. On the soffit of the spaces between the mutules are shaded pink half-rosettes; and the metopes, at the rear of the spaces, are green. The Hellenistic character of this band is obvious.

The third band has a repeating, trefoil leaf, half green and half yellow, against a pink ground through which runs a central horizontal yellow stem, behind the leaves. This occurs in Western illuminated work and in stained glass, and has a distinctly Gothic character.

The wall surface below is divided by white lines into equal rectangles, each containing a Buddha figure in *dhyāni mudrā*, hands clasped in lap, seated on a *padmāsana*, with vesica and nimbus and a small canopy of drapery or foliage. The rectangles are so arranged that the sequence of the three colours of the respective robes follows the same order in both horizontal and vertical directions. Above the brown-robed figure is always a red canopy with a yellow fringe; the others have trees behind them. Background and halo colours are suitably varied.

This repetition of the Buddha, very widely used in most Central Asian shrines, besides its spiritual value comparable to that accruing from the repetition of spoken

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or written prayer, may perhaps also have a vague, allusive link with the miracle of Śravāsti. The faces express placid contentment, and the hair is grey or blue.

The general colour scheme is subdued and agreeable.

Bez. vii. A–C

This is from the south-east corner of the shrine. Three Bodhisattvas are seated cross-legged, on *padmāsanas*, and are members of a gathering of which there are indications of others above. Their costumes are similar to those of *devatas* already described, but here the lower garments have broad ornamental borders. There are slight variations in details of dress and colour, and while the central figure has his hands together in *añjali mudrā*, each of the two side ones holds between his hands a large pink flower, probably a lotus, he on the right delicately guarding the blossom with his right hand as it rests on the levelled palm of his left. Their finger-nails are pointed and the toes of the figure on the left are long and more like fingers.

The plump faces, of Mongolian type, have well-arched eyebrows, patrician noses, and mincing lips adorned with little shadowy moustaches and 'imperials'. Flowing wigs of black or dark-grey hair distinguish the two outer figures, that on the left studded with jewels. Although the ear-lobes are rather elongated, they have no ornaments. Presumably these persons are attending a sermon being delivered by the Buddha, who would be on the right. Presenting a general air of conscious superiority, conceding approval mingled with a slight sense of condescension, they are aware of their own ultimate exalted destiny.

The general condition shows less wanton damage than has been suffered by most of the pictures. The colours have darkened and seem to have an excess of medium, which has caused surface cracking in places. The green is nearly all abraded to white.

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PLATE XXIV

PAINTING FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. x. K–O

FROM the south-west corner of the shrine. Although large portions are missing and the remainder has suffered badly from the depredations of white ants, there still survive interesting details of this elaborate composition. The general ravaged condition makes elucidation very difficult even with the original before one's eyes. Still more difficult does it become in the monochrome reproduction; but with the guidance of the following descriptive notes it may be possible to distinguish much that at first sight seems hopelessly obscure.

The whole appears to present a celestial vision or phantasy in which gods and demons participate amidst rolling streams of cloud. Drawn to various scales, according to their importance, *Lokapālas*, *Dharmapālas*, devils, imps, and human beings play their parts, and, as seen in the foreground, the bird Garuḍa, *vāhana* of Vishnu.

In the upper part there was a row of deities, the first on the left being Kārttikeya, riding on his *vāhana*, the *sīmurgh* or phoenix in the *lalitāsana* pose, that is, with one leg hanging down and the other folded in front. His expression is fierce, with knitted brow and wide-open, glaring eyes. On his shaven head black tufts of hair have been reserved; that over the forehead, tied tightly by a ligature near the roots, spreads, brush-like, in a fringe above his eyebrows. His visible ear is pointed at the top. In each of his six hands is a symbol; the red sun in the upraised upper right hand and the white moon in the left. The next pair carry, in the right, two arrows, and in the left, a bow of Persian type. Of the third pair, the right hand is broken away leaving only two short red stems projecting below. The left rests on the hip and carries a long wand, perhaps the shaft of a lance or pole-axe. Excepting three stoles, respectively red, white, and green, the upper part of the body is nude. On the arms were gilded armlets with bunches of coloured beads. His loin-cloth (*dhotī*) is pink, girdled with a white *kamarband*, and his feet are shod with sandals. The phoenix, with long snaky neck, strides towards the left but turns his head, and with open beak seems to be protesting as he looks upward towards his rider. The wavy line of breast and neck is emphasized by imbricated, scale-like feathers. Claws and head are well drawn, although the left leg shows a joint or angle where none should be.

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Mahākāla, the next divinity, is seated on his yak-like bull, Nandi, in a pose similar to that of Kārttikeya. He preseints an especially fierce and gruesome appearance, with bestial, demoniac face, upward-streaming hair, and cadaverous limbs. His brow is knotted into heavy, frowning folds over wide-open, glaring eyes and hog-like snout. His open mouth displays the viciously curled, projecting tongue. Above the forehead he wears a chaplet of human skulls; and behind his head is an elephant's skin upheld by the two upper arms. The tip of the elephant's trunk appears just by the god's bony elbow. In the right middle hand a flaming sword is held, upright. The other hands and symbols are missing, but a trident visible just above the right knee may be the end of a *vajra* held in the lower right hand. The skeletal structure of the limbs is portrayed, with more force than accuracy, by heavy modelling, and an expression of the ferocious energy animating the god is exhibited in the tense action of the exaggerated muscles of the left foot.

Farther to the right, little remains of the third deity, but the right shoulder, over which fall long black locks of hair, part of the nude trunk, and legs and one foot can be made out. Also the upper right hand holding the red disk of the sun and the middle right hand supporting a seated figure of the Buddha, yellow, with red nimbus. The lower right forearm crosses in front of the breast and one of the fingers of the hand seems to be just in front of the neck. A white girdle encircles the waist.

In the lower half of the picture are four large, standing warriors, probably Lokapālas, several other gods, a few human beings, and a number of little mischievous imps. The large, standing figure, below Kārttikeya, is probably Virūḍhaka. His elephant-head epaulettes, of which that on the left shoulder is clearly visible, would be appropriate to this identification. Looking towards the right with wide-open staring eyes, his rather cruel lips, slightly parted, express satisfaction. His crossed hands rest on the pommel of a mace or sword, just below the lion mask of his girdle. Accompanying him is a charming little 'earth goddess', standing on his left, carrying a dish of fruit. She wears long, flowing garments and an elaborate floral coiffure. Her smooth face, with half-closed eyes and small tight mouth, expresses conscious superiority as she turns towards the warrior. Immediately below is an upturned face with worried, apprehensive look, and before it is a hand raised in supplication or defence. Above the goddess stands an Indian *sādhū*, facing to the right; with pale face, hooked nose, green eyes which glare fiercely, grey beard and grey hair tied in the customary top-knot. Over his left shoulder and

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downwards across his body is a fur *upavīta*; his torso is otherwise bare except for the elaborate jewellery. Both hands are in front of his chest, but their occupation is obscured by damage to the painting. The right hand may hold a flower, or perhaps a censer, and from the lifted little finger of the left rises a thin, thread-like vapoury emanation which, as it rises, gathers into the form of a little trefoil cloud.

Behind Virūḍhaka is a small red-haired attendant with pointed ear, and higher, slightly above the level of the head of the Lokapāla, is a small figure wearing a Chinese hat with stiff streamers, his cheeks puffed out in blowing a whistle held at his lips.

To right of the *sādhū* and divided from him by a belt of cloud, an animated incident is depicted in which a small warrior, in Lokapāla dress, stands in a swinging action of the body towards the right, his right hand upraised, holding two sprigs of grass or twigs threatening chastisement to a group of little demons who are scampering away towards cloud cover. His left hand outstretched, with spread fingers, is an involuntary gesture reflecting concord with the vigorous pose of the other hand. Associated with him is a female divinity, who, with a similar weapon in her left hand, joins in the threat to the absconding storm imps. The two sides of her face can be seen near the left shoulder of the Lokapāla, and her long gown below the outspread fingers of his left hand. One of the imps is emaciated but the others are plump and star-spotted.

Below the drifting trail of cloud containing this little affair is a yellow-faced, star-spotted, snarling demon with flame-like grey hair and tusks at the corners of his open mouth, carrying a bow at his left shoulder. To the right of him is a Chinese figure in a long coat of rich crimson and a black Chinese hat with two stiff tabs projecting from the sides. Between these last two figures is a man carrying two arrows against his right shoulder, and holding his left hand before his mouth as though whispering confidences to the crimson-coated person.

In the centre foreground of the picture is a scene of considerable animation and even violence. The bird-god, Garuḍa, struggling against a mob of assailants, seems to be in a rather hopeless predicament. While flying above, perhaps in his quest of the divine nectar (*amṛta*), he seems to have been winged by an arrow shot by the archer whose arm and bow, charged with an arrow, can be seen below the crimson-coated Chinese. The flying Garuḍa is missing, with so much of the upper part of the picture, but he is represented a second time here, after falling into the enemies' hands, where he is violently resisting the painful assaults of his captors. He has

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been lassoed by the person on the left wearing a Chinese hat, who is pulling at the cord drawn taut by the resisting strain of the Bird. A yelling, spotted demon with uplifted threatening bludgeon has seized Garuḍa's right wrist, while a third person, behind the demon, is rolling up his sleeves in delighted anticipation of delivering his blow. Meanwhile a long, thin hound has pushed in between the several legs of the attackers and has buried his teeth in Garuḍa's right thigh. Behind and above the archer stands a demon with bald pate and long hair streaming from his temples behind his ears; carrying a hawk on his right forearm. Behind the victim of all this violence can be seen a hand with admonishing forefinger raised. This may be a hand of the warrior figure in voluminous robes to the right, of whom not much has survived. His left hand rests on the end of a bow and in front is a quiver. A small part of his face remains between the upward billowing drapery at his shoulders. Behind Garuḍa are long draperies of another standing deity, and there are traces of hands above the little adoring figure who stands or kneels beside the next Lokapāla. The face of this Lokapāla has the usual glaring eyes and full lips. He stands, with booted feet, on the verdant, twin peaks of a highly stylized rock, where the breezes lift high his shoulder drapery.

Better preserved is the small, bearded Nāga deity, standing, barefoot, on a lotus. His identity is established by the snake head-dress. His warrior trappings are less elaborate than those of the Lokapālas, and on his legs are the short fur gaiters, or leglets, frequently worn by figures in the Bezeklik paintings. The same kind of leglet is worn by the bony, long-haired, howling demon above and behind him. This creature bears a long rod over his left shoulder. An interesting person, still higher up, is a highly respectable artist, with paint- or ink-pot on his left hand and a brush held daintily in his right. He is clad in a painter's blouse and wears a black skull cap. At the top of the picture is an elderly *sādhū* with fierce but rather anxious expression, wearing a tiger skin over his left shoulder and a leopard skin round his hips.

The large, majestic Lokapāla on the right, in warrior dress, with plump face, large round eyes, and an elaborate *mukuṭa* bearing a gilded dragon or mongoose crest issuing from a lotus, stands with each foot on a separate green top of a grey rocky peak. On his shoulders are lion-mask epaulettes and a similar mask adorns his belt. Upheld, in the finely drawn right hand, is a *sankh* or a jewel. The left hand is at the left hip, perhaps resting on the head of a mace or sword. Flames rise from the *sankh* and from the wind-blown drapery of the left shoulder. If the little Nāga deity

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be considered as associated with him, he would probably be Virūḍhaka, Guardian of the Southern Region. Behind him is a small figure with pointed ear and gilded *mukuṭa*, and above, another artist or scribe, facing left, with brush and ink-pot.

Pink and green scrolling clouds floating about the background serve to divide incidents and to frame important figures. Many other interesting details can be seen, but too disconnected by the damaged state of the surface to be profitably indicated. Identification of the deities is difficult in their very imperfect condition and must be regarded, in some cases, as purely tentative and open to revision by scholars versed in Buddhist iconography.

The drawing, often careless, shows marked Chinese qualities with Indian influence. Many traces of gold remain but a considerable amount has probably been scraped off or has fallen away.

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PLATE XXV

PAINTINGS FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. x. P, Q

THIS is from the inner end of the east wall of the cella. Although badly damaged and with considerable portions missing, there remain some interesting details. The subject seems to be the triumphal progress of an important person riding a high-stepping horse and attended by a mixed retinue. Unfortunately the rider himself is missing and identification therefore impossible, but from the nature of his entourage it may be assumed that he is a Lokapāla, and perhaps Vaiśravana. Running between the legs of the horse is a long-tailed, sleek hound, his head thrown back and jaws wide open, exposing a curled tongue. A grelot bell swings from his collar. Standing at the wayside is a curious round-shouldered man, wearing extravagantly wide-legged trousers, gazing up at the approaching rider. It is one of the very few examples of a face in profile. His left hand rests on the head of a bamboo staff and at his side is slung a tiger-skin bow case. Behind, to the right, is an earth goddess dressed in the typical long, rich red robe with extravagant pendent sleeves and complicated coiffure, the hair cut in sharp angles over the ears. On a raised platform is another similarly dressed figure with the right arm upraised. Her coiffure is different and seems to be studded with pearls. An unusual feature with both goddesses is the sharp contraction of the eyebrows, giving a stern and rather masculine appearance. In the foreground, on the right, is a kneeling demon with streaming hair, an agonized expression, and tightly clenched fists. Traces of red and green remain on his cloak and *dhotī*, which through abrasion are now merged into one mass. Of the two rather brainless-looking advance guards, one carries a sword against his shoulder. These and the other figures are easily distinguishable. The plump demons with flaming hair, and with tushes at the corners of the mouth, seem to be officiating as policemen and enjoying it. The stars with which they are spotted were probably originally white or gold.

Discoloration, particularly in several of the faces, is perhaps mainly caused by the use of pigment sensitive to atmospheric action. The double contour lines, especially in the faces of the demons, are attributable to this, one of the lines having been a high light, brilliant when applied but now changed to black. Wherever the flesh has not discoloured it is probable that the older, less brilliant, but more stable

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pigment was used. Extensive abrasion and scaling have destroyed much of the colour and have exposed the gypsum priming.

Above, to the left, is the lower part of a *padmāsana*, and on the right can be seen the carelessly drawn bare feet of a figure standing on rocks. Drifting clouds separate these upper subjects from the processional scene below.

The general character of composition, drawing, and colour closely resembles that of Bez. x. K–O, plate XXIV. There is, too, the same obvious enjoyment in the portrayal of the grotesque demons, and similar treatment of the animated drapery of the richly clothed figures; the same restlessness and overcrowding of the picture. It is probable that one artist is responsible for both pictures and that he was a Chinese.

Bez. x. N, O

This is a part of the picture Bez. x. K–O, plate XXIV, and has been described in the note on that plate. This enlargement brings out more clearly some of the interesting features. The artist in the black skull-cap is seen much better here and particularly the delicate pose of the sensitive right hand. It may be of interest to students of Chinese calligraphy to note that the manner of holding the brush by this artist for picture painting is not that usually adopted by Chinese scribes for writing. On the head of the bearded Nāga, the serpent with open mouth and forked tongue is also perfectly clear. For further description the previous note on this picture may be consulted.

Bez. x. D–F, I, J

These come from the west side of the plinth standing near the south end of the cella. Two groups, each of four worshipping figures, are seated on lotuses right and left of a stream or lake contained between eroded banks, water-worn into a succession of irregular points or tongues conventionally divided or contoured by bands of yellow, outlined with black, running inland, a manner of expressing grassy downland usual in these Central Asian paintings. In the centre of the stream, near the foreground, is an island, and in front of this, on a grassy knoll, stands a large pear-shaped object resembling the traditional oil jar, but perhaps a jewel. A similar 'jewel' stands on each bank with a willow tree growing beside it. Farther in the distance are other trees and some conical mounds, perhaps representing mountains. One such mound stands on the left bank, in the foreground.

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On the left bank, beside the stream, sits a figure dressed as a monk, waving aloft, in his left hand, a *pankhā*, and holding in his right a long-necked flask or *gulāb-pāsh*.[1] Facing him, across the stream, is a Vajrapāni with fly-whisk and *vajra*. The other six figures are Bodhisattvas.

The figure of the monk wears the dress of a mendicant. This stylish garment, pink with bands of yellow trimming, conforms to the accepted interpretation for artistic rendering of the patched rags prescribed for his followers by the Buddha. The vertical and horizontal bands, not always correctly drawn, and their generally uncreased condition, give a rather rigid appearance to the figure. The left side of the body is visible as though seen through a transparent material. Stole and lining of the robe are yellow, and in the confused drawing an under-garment of brick-red seems to be intended. The black hair, dressed in a top-knot suggestive of the *uṣnīṣa*, and trimmed in sharp angles over the forehead, is relieved against a green nimbus.

On the opposite bank of the stream, the Vajrapāni, seated with one knee raised, is a fine, decorative figure, in the full panoply of a warrior. His face is that of a demon, with wolf's ears; and his streaming hair, bushy and black, is massed behind the shoulders against a yellow nimbus. The colouring of his dress conforms, in general, to descriptions already given. The jewellery is all yellow (gold), the gorget is green with gold, scrolled border, the tunic grey; skirt or kilt, yellow and dull red, and the cape, dull pink. It may be noted that the forearms are treated differently from those of the similar figure on plate XXVI. The short *vajra* resting against his left knee has triśūla limbs. Both he and the Bodhisattva opposite have the much-admired leonine torso.

The remaining six figures are Bodhisattvas, elegantly dressed in flowing garments and the usual jewellery. The colours used in the costumes are red, brick-red, yellow, green, and white. Slightly varied in their application to individual figures, a detailed description of the third from the left will serve as an example of the treatment. This is the least defaced of the *devatās*, and exhibits both the considerable executive skill of the artist and his poor understanding of the 'structure' of draperies. The loin-cloth is dull pink, bordered with yellow and grey; the skirt, red with yellow border and red lining. Round the hips is a yellow sash. The stole is dull pink lined with grey or green. Armlets and bangles are golden and the latter have pink and green flower-shape jewels attached to their upper edge.

The two first Bodhisattvas or *devatās* turn their heads towards each other as

[1] Cf. the figure with similar attributes in Bez. xii. J–L, plate XXVIII.

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though conversing, and the last pair on the right appear to be similarly engaged. All but two have their hands folded in *añjali-mudrā*. Of these two, the figure on the extreme left has the right hand raised as in teaching or arguing (*vitarka-mudrā*), and the right palm turned outwards in *vara-mudrā*. The second figure from the right end seems to bear some object on the left hand and to be gently touching or steadying it with the tips of the fingers of the other hand. All the figures but the monk have a flame ornament rising from the tiara or *mukuṭa*.

Floating against the pale vermilion background are scattered pink or yellow flowers with green centres.

All contour lines are drawn with thin, wiry precision, lacking the suave quality usual with brush lines. Oxidization and abrasion have contributed to the extensive destruction of the picture.

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PLATE XXVI

PAINTINGS FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. x. A, B

THIS comes from the east side of the base of the cult figure placed near the south end of the cella. As this is an almost exact replica of the right-hand end of the picture Bez. x. D–F, I, J, plate xxv, a brief description only need be given here, and the fuller note on plate xxv may be referred to for more details.

A considerable amount of discoloration, probably due to the use of lead white, has marred much of the painting, more especially the flesh colours; and abrasion has caused further deterioration.

On the left, a Vajrapāṇi sits cross-legged, waving a yak-tail *chaurī* above his head with his right hand while the left rests on the top of a *vajra* in his lap. His forearms are covered with sleeves figured with the curious plaiting already described in connexion with the *ḍākinīs* on plates xx and xxi. Indications of the green downs, more clearly seen in the version on plate xxv, appear on the left. The other three figures are Bodhisattvas with hands folded in *añjali-mudrā*; two seated cross-legged and the end one with the right knee raised supporting the right elbow. He seems to be conversing with the next Bodhisattva, whose head is turned towards him.

Bez. ix. A

This is from the south-east wall of the cella of this shrine. It is a fragment from a *praṇidhi* scene of which one side of vesica and nimbus of a standing figure of the Buddha and three adorants remain, all very badly oxidized and discoloured.

The central figure was evidently turned towards the right, as the upraised left hand is extended in *vitarka-mudrā* in that direction. Part of the robe covers the upper arm and shoulder and a floral garland hangs over it. Nimbus and vesica show many-coloured vertical zigzags surrounded by bands, once red, now blackish-brown, on which are traces of rosettes; and outer zones, probably green, with a discoloured scroll pattern.

The kneeling figure, of decidedly Mongol type, is dressed as a Bodhisattva and presents to the Buddha an object, one end of which hangs over the left wrist, looking like an animal's skin, yellow with dark tiger-like stripes. The loin-cloth of the donor is yellow shaded with dull red, and has a red-brown border. His skirt

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is a fine dark orange-red. Over the left shoulder and arm is a brown-pink stole. The nimbus is faded and discoloured.

Above is a bald-headed monk, his hands in *añjali* pose, turned towards the Buddha.

At the top is a Bodhisattva, also in *añjali* pose. The flesh colour has faded and the whites of the eyes are oxidized to black. Above is part of the usual frieze of festooned textiles.

The whole has become reduced by abrasion and discoloration to a general scheme in blackish-brown and buff, with traces of original colour here and there, the lower part being best preserved. Wherever green seems to have been used is now bare mud colour, as though the pigment had scaled off carrying the white priming coat with it. The Mongolian features of all the figures would indicate that the painter was of the same race. Lead white is said to have been introduced from China, and in any of these paintings where Chinese craftsmanship seems probable, there is usually considerable oxidization, especially with the white.

Bez. x. C

This is from the west wall of the cella. Three figures, all facing to the right, are, doubtless, Bodhisattvas in attendance on a divinity missing from this fragment. The lowest figure, in warrior's dress, is kneeling, his body bending slightly back as he gazes upward, and with right arm crossed in front, he lifts his hand—if the claw-like limb just above the face be the hand—in an attitude of supplication or salutation. The flesh is oxidized to dark brown and the whites of the round, staring eyes to black. His blue-grey hair carries a pink, flame-like ornament in front. The nimbus is oxidized to dark liver-colour and of the other colours only traces have survived. The general character of the figure is rather Nepalese.

The second figure, also in warrior dress, stands holding a dish between both hands in front of his breast. The dish seems to contain a small flaming or steaming cup from which projects the knob of a spoon or other small implement. The head, relieved against a green nimbus, is well drawn and carried with dignity; and although discoloured it is possible to see the staring eyes and the raised eyebrows sloping sharply down at their inner ends. The hands are very delicately drawn. The gold necklet is spotted with red, and the gorget is green. The upper arms are now a pale dull pink and the forearms dark grey, buff, and pink. Originally the tunic may have been yellow, but is now grey; and the stole, pale dull pink. The 'sporran' has

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a yellow centre surrounded by dull pink and blue-grey. The short skirt or kilt is in three horizontal bands; the upper one, dark grey between a blue line below and blue and yellow above; the middle band, green between yellow and pink; and the lower band, dark grey between blue. Probably there was a green frill at the lower edge. A mantle is tied in front of the neck. The legs are armoured and discoloured.

The upper figure is dressed as a Lokapāla, and his face is that of a satyr, elderly, rugged, and bearded. The well-drawn hands hold a golden censer with green top, from which rises a spiral cloud of incense. Oxidized like the others, the contour lines of the face are frequently double, caused by a line of high light drawn in white parallel to the outline having turned black. The red contour lines are now lighter than the oxidized high-lights.

The whole is much broken and the paint so faded and discoloured as sometimes to change or obscure completely the original colours. The inferior pigments, excellent drawing, the posing of the figures and their unusual rendering suggest Chinese work, an opinion supported by the presence of an inscription in Chinese characters on the label at the top right.

Bez. xi. D, E

No indication is given on the plan of the position of this piece. It may have come from the ceiling. Four Buddha figures, part of a diapered arrangement, are seated on streaming clouds. They all wear the barred robe of a mendicant and have the left hand resting, palm up, on the lap, and the right raised in teaching pose. They may represent Maitreya, the future Buddha. The whole is badly abraded and the features of the rather tanned face almost obliterated. The grey hair is outlined with red. The outer robe is pink, barred with buff, and perhaps lined with green. The under-robe is unusual. It has an upper border of buff which crosses from the left shoulder to the right side. Below is a sort of waistband of grey-black, with green below and light grey above. No lotus is distinguishable under the figures, but between them and the clouds is green, which may represent the lotus seed table. The clouds are green, pale pink, and red-pink. The faded colourings of the haloes ring the changes between green, pink, buff, and white. Jewel-centred lotuses float in the white background.

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PLATE XXVII

PAINTING FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. xii. A–I

THIS large picture, 11 feet 10 inches high by 18 feet in length, was removed from the inner end of the south-east wall. At the end of the cella was originally a kind of altar, upon which lay, as on a couch, the recumbent effigy of the departed Buddha—after the attainment of Parinirvāṇa—his head directed towards the west, or, if the orientation of Afrāz-gul's plan is correctly indicated, the south-west. This effigy was doubtless modelled in mud plaster, and had long before been destroyed.

At the bottom of the extremely interesting right-hand section, A to C, the figure seated in meditation is probably the disciple Mahā Kassapa, who would thus be at the feet of the Buddha. There is a calm serenity expressed in this figure, as of all doubts removed and complete composure of conscience attained. His thin grey moustache indicates that he is advanced in years; and his smooth, unwrinkled face that his life has been 'void of cares and strife'. He comes now to keep vigil at the feet of the departed Master. Deep in meditation, he is oblivious of the noisy demonstrations in progress behind him. Although he is clearly Chinese, the whole conception and design of the figure calls to mind some of those of the early Italian painters, but with less of their Byzantine rigidity. There are qualities in this figure such as are not found in any other of our Central Asian paintings. The correct proportions, easy and expressive pose, the delicate contouring of the simple white drapery with its graceful, flowing lines, the conscientious observance of the manner in which the discreetly placed yellow bands follow the folds, all together express the quality of an artist of a different calibre from those responsible for the surrounding work, or, indeed, for any of the other pictures in the collection.

The group of figures above, probably designed by the artist of the Mahā Kassapa, but not executed by him, is full of interest. The loudly lamenting, emaciated old disciple in Buddhist robes is eloquent of unrestrained, vociferous grief; one hand at his ear in a pose common to those who would concentrate their yells, and the other curling itself in nervous action at his knee. His rheumy, wide-open eyes glare despairingly from his tear-sodden face into a future void of all but immeasurable desolation. The two ash-smeared, well-nourished *sādhus*, with

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rather coarse features, one carrying a typical crutched stick (*bairāgun*), are characters still familiar in India. Four musicians contribute to the sounds of lamentation, with professional enthusiasm and energy. The drummer holds the drum under his right arm and beats it with a ball-headed stick—not the usual Indian type—held in his left hand. It will be seen that he has reddish hair and green eyes. It was recorded by the Chinese pilgrim Hsüan-tsang, in the seventh century, that the people of Khotan had green eyes, and that they were very fond of music and dancing. May not these be an itinerant party of Khotanese performers? To the left of the drummer the cymbal player clashes his box-like instruments above his head. The performer whose head is missing plays a flute, the end, with the left hand fingering the notes, being still preserved. The white-haired *biwa* player uses the classical plectrum, and, like the other members of the troup, seems to be singing or humming. From the animated poses of the legs, especially those of the flautist, they are all stamping or dancing in time with their music, and the old *biwa* player is clearly beating time with the great toe of his left foot. The curious, short, fur gaiters, with no visible means of support, occur frequently in the Bezeklik pictures and are perhaps a local fashion of the period. The whole of this section is remarkable for its character studies, and for the natural proportions of the bodies, a quality not found in the other pictures from this site.

In the centre panel, D, E, F, the robust but short-legged standing Buddha figure has a lotus under each foot. He stands on a wooden raft, of Chinese make, floating on the swirling waters of a stream—perhaps the 'Ocean of Existence'—with deeply eroded banks. I am diffident about describing the Buddha's dress by naming each garment. Like those who compile cookery recipes or describe card games, writers on costume usually succeed in creating baffling obscurity over the subject they set out to explain. In the case of those who profess to enlighten us on the subject of Buddhist canonical costume, confusion is increased by want of agreement among the experts themselves. With the desire to avoid drawing down upon myself similar criticism, it may be safely stated that here the Buddha appears to wear the three canonical garments respectively called the *uttarāsanga*, the *sanghāṭī*, and the *antaravāsaka*; and of these the first is the outer, enveloping red robe; the second, the blue garment showing at the breast and below the lower edge of the first; and the third, the crimson garment falling below the blue, to the feet. It may be that a fourth garment lies close to the body, showing its upper edge at the breast, above the edge of the blue. This would, perhaps, be the *nivāsana*, and is

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permissible; but the lines suggesting this may be intended only to emphasize the pectoral muscles.

Muddy water, smeared on face and breast, is the work of infidels; but in spite of this disfigurement the downcast eyes and the smiling mouth can still be faintly seen. The right hand is upraised in teaching pose, the points of the discourse being checked by the thumb on the finger joints. Between thumb and first finger there is a faint indication of the web, traditionally recorded to be one of the distinguishing attributes of the Buddha. It is unusual for the Buddha to wear ornaments, and the jewelled garland bedecking this and other similar figures would seem to be unorthodox. As we know, it is recorded that Gautama, after his flight from the palace, stripped off all his princely ornaments and jewels and gave them to his groom Chandaka to take back home, together with his faithful and heart-broken steed. It has been suggested that the garlands are just temporary tributes of love and esteem from devoted followers in observance of a still-surviving and charming Indian custom. For the significance of the raft-like *āsana* I have, so far, failed to trace authority. References to the sea, in an allegorical sense, such as 'The Ocean of Transmigration' or of 'Existence', are frequent in the Master's discourses; and there is the incident of his settling the dispute between the Śākyas and Koliyas over water rights in the river Rohini; but none of these allusions to water offers a satisfactory explanation. The probability that there was some legend definitely involving an actual boat is strengthened by the other example, and in that case of a more substantial craft, in Bez. iii. G–K, in plate XVII.

Gifts of fruit, sweetmeats, and other food come from all sides. On the left two men, perhaps the merchants Trapusa and Bhallika, the first of Buddha's converts, present offerings. Their laden camel and white horse would represent their caravan of 'five hundred carts'. On the right a distinguished person in black top-boots (with suspenders) kneels on one knee as he proffers his tray of cakes. The fair-faced brown-haired person behind him, wearing a peculiar white cap, probably comes from the north-west. At the top, on the same side, a *bhikkhu* with shaven head, but wearing a neat little moustache, imitates with his left hand the gesture of the Buddha's right. He is very short and wears black shoes. On the opposite side is the mail-clad Vajrapāṇi grasping his diamond *vajra* and waving a *chaurī*. Below him is a *devatā* in reverential pose.

The third panel, G, H, I, shows a preaching Buddha, his right hand in teaching pose before his breast. Although badly defaced with mud, the web between thumb

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and finger can still be made out. The left hand supports a fold of his robe. Jewelled garlands, more profuse than in the last, are looped about shoulders and arms. The plum-colour under-garment, reaching to the feet, is figured with repeating floral sprays—an unorthodox enrichment difficult to account for in one who has all the attributes of the Buddha. Nimbus and petal-shaped vesica are different in detail from the last, but express the same idea of flames and prismatic light. On the right is a queer little dwarf, who might be a child but for his dainty moustache. His little jewelled cap is childish and, as a child might, he seems to advance doubtfully, turning his head as though for encouragement from the person behind, upon whose right foot one of his is resting. This other person, if not a *devatā*, might be a queenly mother, and the small figure her princely son. Above is an adoring monk with fancifully trimmed short hair. In the top corner a moustached *devatā* carries a dish of flowers, and raises high the right hand with fingers posed in imitation of those of the Buddha.

On the other side, below, is a small Buddha, in devout pose, kneeling on one knee and gazing up at the great Buddha. His hair, which rises into the regulation *uṣnīṣa*, is blue and trimmed at the edges like that of the monk. Above is a Bodhisattva, indistinct and extensively defaced, with the left hand in front of the body and turned sharply downwards, showing the palm. Next above is a very emaciated *bhikkhu*, reproduced with the mansion, to a larger scale, in monotone, on plate XXVIII.

Small flowers float about the background, and simple decorative bands border the panels. Part of the vaulted ceiling shows rows of seated Buddhas.

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PLATE XXVIII

PAINTINGS FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. xii. J–L

THIS fragment is from the wall facing A, B, C, plate XXVII, and is part of a group of mourners at the head of the recumbent Buddha. All four are loudly lamenting. The figure on the left, in his wild demonstrations, waves aloft in his right hand a long-necked flask and in his left a leaf-shape fan.[1] His robe is red with buff lining. His short hair, rising on top in a small *uṣnīṣa*, is blue and trimmed in front like that of the small Buddha at I, on plate XXVII.

Bez. xii. I

Some interesting details appear in this enlargement of the upper left corner of the picture on plate XXVII. The head of the monk shows careful study of the bony structure. Pronounced supra-orbital ridges bulge over the seemingly lidless eyes, with grey-green irises and the whites now oxidized to brown. The nose is rather long and pointed, and the prominent jaws reveal a few teeth between the slightly parted, nervous lips. Shaven head, eyebrows, and beard show a stubble of, probably, white hair, indicated by a stipple of dots, now discoloured to red. Asceticism has reduced the flesh of neck and breast to a mere drapery of flaccid folds. The hands, with long, pointed finger-nails, are folded in adoration as he seems to listen in breathless ecstasy to the inspired words of the Master.

Above is a mansion which seems to stand on a tiled terrace, raised within high walls. Although the chequered space within the walls has the appearance of tiling, there are certain irregularities that would favour the interpretation of it as steps or stylized rocks. Outside the walls a rather similar scheme certainly favours this explanation. The mansion would thus be on the summit of a hill surrounded by the wall, reached from below by steps rising in rather confused construction from an indefinite lower level. Entrance to the enclosure is by way of a pair of solid wooden doors, considerately ajar, for they give access to the precincts of the mansion, which, as the Chinese character boldly inscribed on the gable-end proclaims, is Heaven. Scrollwork decorates the face of the wall, and a band of roundels borders the top. At the top of the inner surface is a band of a kind of plait pattern, familiar in early Chinese textiles. Chinese, too, is the architecture of the building,

[1] Cf. the figure with the same attributes in Bez. x. I, J, plate XXV.

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with its bracketed eaves, curving, tiled roof, and grotesque bird's-head ridge-ends. In the centre of the ridge is a flaming jewel. The mansion has double doors, similar to that in the wall—these, also, reassuringly ajar—and a square window on the side wall. There is an extension of similar type built at the back, perhaps as a chapel or shrine. Trees growing outside the wall raise their leafy tops above the chapel.

Bez. xii. M

A standing figure of a donor of high rank from a painting on the north-east inner reveal of the entrance (see plan). The long, green robe with long, loose sleeves is confined at the waist by a brown belt. The robe is figured with dull yellow spots, outlined red and with a red spiral line running into the spot; perhaps the Chinese Ying-yang. He wears black shoes. Hanging from the belt are a black, triangular pouch on each side, pen, knife, and perhaps eating-stick cases. A knotted buff band hangs at the right side. With both hands, at breast level, he holds a floral branch, of which two leaves appear beside his head. The face is plump, has a thin, drooping moustache, scanty beard, and small pink lips. The eyes are narrow and oblique. Long black bands flowing behind the right shoulder down to the elbow may be hair, or, more probably, hair reinforced with wool or other material plaited into it. Human ingenuity in the fashioning of head-dresses seems to be inexhaustible, and nowhere has it manifested itself in greater variety than in Central Asia; and no head-dress of more singular form has appeared than that worn by this person. Briefly, it suggests a bowl with three long legs, placed on the head in an inverted position, the bowl forming a cap and the legs standing up above. A red-brown head-band and a narrow red chin-strap, the ends tied below the chin, hold it in place. It seems to have been a style peculiar to local Uigurs of this period (eighth to ninth century A.D.).

As with most of the figures in the Bezeklik pictures, the legs of this person are much too short. He stands on a buff pavement against a red background. Faintly traceable to the right is perhaps a second figure. The band of ornament below is similar to that at the bottom of Bez. xii. A–I (plate XXVII).

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PLATE XXIX

PAINTINGS FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. xiii. C

It is unfortunate that so little remains of this very interesting painting, and that the surviving part is so extensively damaged. The decorative treatment of the face of the figure of the Buddha, while retaining the traditional characteristics of kindliness blended with authority, is carried to an extreme of stylization, more particularly in the drawing of the lips and the fantastic treatment of moustache and 'imperial'. The boldly arched eyebrows, the parallel folds of the upper eyelids, and the gentle curve of the nose help, by contrast, to give importance to the sharp narrow slits of eyes with their lazy but calculating expression. Unlike most of the Bezeklik faces, the lines of the eyebrows do not join that of the nose; and the inner ends of the eyebrows do not meet. The mouth is closed, and the artist seems to have delighted in drawing its graceful curves and those of the rippling moustache. The small part remaining of hand and wrist, in the pose of reassurance (*abhaya-mudrā*), shows grace and accuracy of drawing, and is less out of proportion to the size of the head than usual. It will be noticed that considerable use is made of double lines. The explanation of this is that at some period it became the practice with artists in Turfān to give sparkle and animation to their work by the introduction of 'high lights', applied in thin lines of white, generally close alongside the contour lines of red, blue, or black. The white used in some cases was probably a lead preparation, imported from China; and in course of time the white lines became grey or black through oxidization, and so the double lines appear. In this and the two adjoining heads the whites of the eyes have, from the same cause, turned to dark grey.

Hair, eyebrows, moustache, and 'imperial' are blue. The flesh, now discoloured by oxidation, was pale, almost white. On the left, beside the cheek, are traces of a green nimbus.

The *intonaco* of this fragment is peculiar in having a layer of fine-grain, tough and flexible, dark red clay below a coarser surface layer of the usual grey fibrous mud. These two different textures can be seen in the reproduction beside the cheek and to the left of the hand.

Bez. xiii. D. a

Head and part of the body of a monk with hands in *añjali* pose; all badly

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damaged. The flesh is pale and partly oxidized, especially the whites of the eyes, as in the previous example. The hair is blue-black; the eyebrows faded or shaven. Behind the head is a green nimbus bordered with buff; and the robe is pale pink, shaded with red and blue-edged. The under-robe, showing below the breast, is blue-black. The contour lines are black and the background rich red.

Bez. xiii. D. b

The head of a Bodhisattva with black hair dressed in a top-knot, with two thin tresses looped across the ear and others hanging to and rippling forward over the shoulders. The flesh and eyes are like those of the monk. The eyebrows are less arched than usual, and they do not meet; but they and the moustache and 'imperial' are fantastically drawn. The *tilaka* is oxidized to grey, and there is no colour on the lips. The taenia is very pale pink, outlined with blue. A double band, pink and grey, encircles the neck. The nimbus is white, bordered with shaded blue and red, and the robe is red.

This, and the two preceding examples, although unequal in quality, show considerable skill and freedom in the drawing of contour lines; and if not all painted by the same hand, are produced under the direction of one artist, whose style is different from that of most of the Bezeklik work.

Bez. xiii. A

Like the examples above, this is in a bad state, and seems to have been deliberately damaged. It shows four or five stalwart male figures, clad only in closely tied *dhotīs*, wading in a turbulent torrent. The first two figures to the right, as they press forward raise the left hand, perhaps as a gesture of reassurance. The *dhotī* of the first is white, edged with green; the second red, edged with green and with white (probably abraded green) at the waist. On the next two, to the left, no *dhotī* is distinguishable. To the extreme right is a small fragment of a fifth figure; and to the left is the top of the head of another; and there were probably more. All appear to have long hair dressed in a high top-knot with tresses hanging behind the shoulders. The flesh is oxidized to brownish-black; the hair is blue-black. As they force their way through the raging water the action of the men is very realistic, and such as would be familiar to those living near the mountain gorges of the locality, subject to spate in seasonal torrential floods.

The water is blue-grey, contoured in Chinese style with blue. There appears to

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be a snake-like dragon winding through the water, scales of whose body can be made out in patches surviving on the left of the picture. These are dull pink outlined in grey, and are perhaps those of the under side, the upper being green and looking more like the banks of the stream, but too badly damaged to determine whether it is dragon or land. In the top left corner can be seen a duck, now dark brown, rising on outspread wings. Along the lower edge is a band of dark brown with traces of a Brāhmī inscription in a lighter colour.

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PLATE XXX

PAINTINGS FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. xiii. Ceiling

A FRAGMENT from the vaulted ceiling of the shrine; probably one of many repetitions forming a diaper. It represents the Buddha seated on a lotus throne with polygonal base, with his right hand raised in *vitarka-mudrā* and the left resting on his lap. The robe is very stylized. To his right a man or Bodhisattva, and to his left a monk, kneel in devotion. Above and behind, on his right, is a kneeling, Buddha-like figure, perhaps Avalokiteśvara, carrying a long-handled fan in the right hand and a flask in the left. Above, on the left of the Buddha, is a kneeling Vajrapāṇi with round, staring eyes and pointed ears. On top of his mass of black hair is a curious head-dress, shaped like two crescents laid on their backs, joined end to end, and at their junction a bunch of red flowers or berries, with a double cincture at its base. It seems to be a badly drawn attempt to represent a helmet with wide upturned brim. Two white bands rising from the shoulders to the ears may be intended for the edges of a high collar. As usual, he carries a yak-tail fly-whisk in the right hand and the *vajra* in the left. All four attendant figures are on lotus thrones.

Below is a fragment of two lines of well-written Brāhmī, in dense black on a hard, polished yellow-brown band, evidently prepared to bear the pressure of a *qalam*, with which the writing was done.

The background is bright red, with floating lotuses.

On the right is part of a similar subject. The Avalokiteśvara in this case carries flask and fan in the reverse hands. All the work is very roughly done by an unskilled hand; and the original drawing has probably deteriorated through frequent repetition.

Bez. xiii. D. 2

There is evidently a legend illustrated here. It may be that of the white dog of Sūkā. In a former birth the dog, twice represented, was Sūkā's father, who, before his decease, concealed his treasure by secretly burying it under a divan. The dog shown above is barking at the Buddha (?); below he lies on the divan, while Bodhisattvas try to coax him with dainty food to reveal the secret.

The figure dressed as a *devatā*, or Bodhisattva, kneels at the divan and offers, with

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graceful courtesy and conciliatory intent, a bowl of tempting food to the unresponsive guardian. The dress consists of a long, red skirt, partly covered by a loin-cloth of pale pink, girded by a grey *kamarband*. A long pink stole with blue lining twines about arms and body, and blue, floral jewels enrich the bracelets.

To the left is the lower part of a standing figure in dress closely resembling that of the other, but round the hips appears to be a narrow green cloth. Parts of both hands are visible, grasping some indistinguishable object.

There is probably a third figure, partly visible to the left but very indistinct. All have bare feet.

The attempt at perspective in drawing the structures behind the divan is too confused to convey the artist's conception of them. The divan is rectangular, with moulded cornice and base painted red, and blue pilasters at the corners. The panels are buff, with seven irregular scattered shapes painted in black outline on the nearest. If ever a dog expressed irritation, this one on the divan does. He is of the Afghān hound type, with smooth body and furry ears, jowls, and tail; and the artist has succeeded in suggesting, by the fierce glare in his eye and the position of his ears, defiance of the beguilements of his tempters as he turns his head away, with a threatening snarl from those dangerous-looking jaws. Above and farther back is, perhaps, a brick plinth of alternate grey and buff bricks, supporting a green-topped pedestal, approached by a green ramp or stairway. On the pedestal sits the dog, tail erect, in the alert pose of a Chinese kylin.

The background of the lower part is green. A band of red lies between the green and the base of the wall, and the wall above is pale pink-buff. Contour lines are black.

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PLATE XXXI

PAINTINGS FROM BEZEKLIK

Bez. xiii. B

FROM the south wall of cella. A celestial figure—*apsara*—descends on very decorative clouds, her arms upraised and flowing draperies streaming backwards as she floats swiftly down. No wings control her flight. Aerial figures of human form are rarely, if ever, furnished with wings in Indian and Chinese medieval art, unless under influence from the West. The only examples in the paintings of this collection are the 'angel' heads of Mīrān (plates I and III), and these conform with the Gandhāra practice and so may be considered as influenced by Western convention. It is true that Garuḍa is given wings; but he is a bird, and if often given a human body, in that incarnation presents but an inversion of the principle.

Oxidization has disfigured the face of the *apsara*, and other parts of the picture have suffered from abrasion and flaking. The long under-robe is pale pink, the upper robe dull red trimmed with blue; the long stoles and sashes pale pink and blue. The folds or pleats of the sleeves on the forearms are similar to those of the *ḍākinīs* on plates XX and XXI. Below the *apsara* the rolling clouds are designed with true Chinese fancy, in which the vapoury masses are gathered into floral forms, in colour reflecting that of the draperies; and adapted as a repeating band of ornament, now very fragmentary, between the two discoloured bands above. These two bands seem to have been varnished to make the surface sufficiently hard to bear the pressure of some kind of broad-tipped *qalam* with which the inscription in very formal Brāhmī characters has been written. The background to the *apsara* is dull pinkish-red.

Bez. xiv. A–D

This painting is from the north wall of the cella and, if the scale of the plan is correct, it extended the entire length of the wall.

For convenience of description the picture may be considered as divided into four vertical sections. Of these, that on the left seems to be related to some scheme farther in that direction, perhaps on the 'return' wall at the west end of the cella. It portrays two *Nāgarājās* wading in the waters of a lotus lake contained between

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eroded banks. The *Nāgas* are barelegged, have bestial faces with bushy, flowing beards, and long, wavy hair; and carry trays laden with flaming jewels.

Along the top of the next two sections a row of five seated Buddhas, with the right hands in *vitarka-mudrā* and the left in *dhyāni-mudrā*, descend on streaming clouds. Perhaps they are the five Dhyānī Buddhas. A sixth is just discernible farther to the right, who may be Vajrasattva.

In the second vertical section are two scenes, surrounded and divided from each other by elaborately scrolled clouds. The upper of these two represents a Buddha (Vajrasattva?), robed as a monk, enthroned in the *dhyānāsana* attitude, the right hand raised in *vitarka-mudrā* and the left touching the earth—*bhūmisparśa-mudrā*. On his breast is a swastika. He is addressing an assembly of monks, five on one side and nine on the other. The subject of the lower scene (reproduced to a larger scale below) is similarly arranged but the central figure is not in the dress of a monk, but is nude to the waist and has nether garments, stoles, and jewellery comprising a usual type of dress for a Bodhisattva. His hands are crossed flat against his breast, and his audience is composed of nine Bodhisattvas, four on his right and five on his left. There is a tenth figure, kneeling in front, facing the central figure and therefore with back to us.

The fourth vertical section follows the same scheme as the second; two teaching Bodhisattvas, each surrounded by an audience. The upper of the two groups is badly faded and indistinct. The central figure lifts the right hand in teaching pose and the left is pendent in front as though grasping something. The lower subject is also indistinct. The Teacher has both hands level with his chest, and his audience consists of seven Bodhisattvas, three to the left and four to the right.

The two Buddhas in the third vertical section, standing against petal-shaped vesicas, are dressed as mendicants and have the right hands raised in teaching pose, that of the Buddha on the right showing the web between thumb and first finger. In the crowd of Bodhisattvas present, their hands devoutly folded, is a monk, whose shaven head appears at the top of the central group. A fence of double rails, stiffened with short posts set in metal 'housings', standing on paved steps, divides this *maṇḍala* from two long horizontal flower beds, intersected by two narrow green lines. From these beds rise two rows of Bodhisattva heads, three above and four below—a curious and unique feature.

In a lower register extending the whole length of the wall is a refreshing and frankly secular scene recording the approach of a caravan or procession of pilgrims

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towards a temple. Advancing from the left, the party, on foot, is just issuing from a wild, mountainous region by a pass opening on to a verdant plain at the foot of the hills. An intervening river, running between low hilly banks, is spanned by a rather slender trestle bridge, over which four advanced members of the expedition (one wearing a conical Chinese hat) are cautiously crossing. In the foreground a camel, laden with gifts for the shrine, is led by a man towards the stream, probably to a ford, the bridge being too slight to sustain so much weight. Behind follow others with a group of ponies, one man in the foreground wearing a Chinese hat similar to that of the man on the bridge. He and the four persons with him fold their hands in reverence as the sacred building comes within their view. The temple or shrine which is doubtless the immediate goal of the pilgrims is a timber-framed building of Chinese architecture, with boldly projecting eaves supported on triple brackets, and comprises a central block flanked by adjoining wings of slightly less lofty elevation, all roofed with tiles. It stands within a quadrangular walled enclosure, and is placed well back, leaving a spacious forecourt between it and the wide entrance gateway facing it, and giving access to the enclosure.

The surrounding plain or *bāg* affords amenities for those who minister at the shrine or for visiting worshippers. Varieties of trees give grateful shade to those desiring rest for contemplation or agreeable conditions for discussion. Two persons under a tree, one kneeling and gesticulating with his right hand and facing a seated companion, seem to be in lively debate. Another pair farther to the right are more sedate, and have wisely provided themselves with a rug to sit upon. On the other side of the enclosure is a man dressed in a short tunic, standing under a tree. Near the end of the picture a label, provided for the usual Chinese inscription, is blank.

It is a pleasing scene, such as might have been witnessed when Buddhist priests and envoys from China made their arduous pilgrimages to the sacred places of Śakyamuni's teaching and to the hallowed relic shrines in northern India, halting frequently at the many monasteries, where they were courteously received and hospitably entertained.

The perished condition of the surface of the picture is deplorable and makes recognition of detail difficult and in many parts impossible. The work seems to have been executed by Chinese painters, whose pigments and technique were not quite suitable for mural painting.

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PLATE XXXII

PAINTING FROM DANDĀN-OILIK

D. II

THE brittle and friable nature of the plaster made it impossible to remove this painting from the wall of the shrine. It is therefore not represented in the collection in the Central Asian Antiquities Museum, New Delhi; nor have I seen it. But having certain features of unique interest Sir Aurel Stein desired that a reproduction of his photograph of it should be included in the Portfolio. The photograph was taken by him when he discovered the shrine during his first Central Asian Expedition in 1900–1, long before his skill in photography had reached the high level that distinguishes his later pictures. The enlargement now given is based upon a print from his very imperfect half-plate negative, the negative itself having long since disappeared: and the present result is a triumph of the skill and judgement of those artists at the Oxford University Press who, under the direction of Mr. Charles Batey, O.B.E., Printer to the University, have produced such a successful picture from very unpromising material. It is greatly to be regretted that much in the left foreground is so vague, but the fault lies in the original print and cannot be helped.

Not having had the good fortune to see the painting myself, I had hoped that Stein would have contributed his description of it. But this was not to be and such particulars as follow are compiled from the record embodied in his report of the expedition,[1] written after our joint study of the photograph and his contemporary notes.

The shrine containing the picture was a very small free-standing structure, timber framed with thin, plaster walls. It measured 12 ft. 8in. by 8 ft. 8 in., the length lying north to south. Near the south-west corner, on the right of the picture, was the figure modelled in clay in high relief, of a mail-clad warrior (perhaps the Lokapāla Vaiśravaṇa) standing on a prostrate foe. He wears a coat resembling those found some years ago in Tibet, now in the British Museum. Made of leather, it is armoured with scales laced or riveted in horizontal rows on the skirt and in vertical rows on the part above the hips, these last overlapping upward. It is of interest that this method of upward overlapping, the reverse of western

[1] Stein, *Ancient Khotan.*

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practice, corresponds with armour worn by soldiers in the army of Buddha's enemy Māra, represented on a sculptured stone fragment from Gandhāra in the Lahore Museum. The practical advantage of the upward overlap of the scales lies in the greater flexibility afforded than by having the scales arranged in the reverse way. Other points of interest in this figure are discussed in *Ancient Khotan*.[1]

The wall painting appears to be a confused composition, not fully understood, and for this reason may seem wanting in coherence. It obviously illustrates some legend and has particular significance in presenting a figure which at once recalls the western conception of Venus, here assuming the role of a Nāginī rising from the waters of a tank or lotus lake. The resemblance to the Medicean Venus is so close as to give the immediate impression of that, or one of many similar Greek or Roman versions, being the source of inspiration. We recognize the slight crook of the left knee, the forward droop of the body, the youthful breasts and, most significant, the action of the arms in bringing the beautiful hands into the positions indicative of maidenly modesty. Further aid is afforded to this assumption of virginal coyness by the introduction of an unorthodox vine-leaf 'apron' where western convention would prescribe the traditional fig-leaf. Only one other example in Central Asian art of a leaf 'apron' is known to me, and this occurs on a stone figure of Hāritī among the Gandhāra sculptures in the Lahore Museum, (No. 2100). The leaf in that case seems to hang from a girdle round the hips, underneath the long flowing *sārī*, which because of the introduction of the leaf may be presumed to be semi-transparent. That western influence might be present in the design of the Nāginī is not improbable when one considers the fine Graeco-Buddhist seals found at Yōtkan in the Khotan region and the seal impressions with figures of Athene Promachos, Pallas Athene, and Eros on wooden documents of the second and third centuries A.D. recovered by Stein from sites in the Taklamakān Desert.[2] It is not unlikely that seal gems bearing the figure of this Venus should have reached the Khotan district. But the presence of the leaf 'apron' on such a figure in a Greek or Roman gem is very doubtful and is perhaps an adaptation by the artist.

In the character of a Nāginī our Venus is here decked with ornaments suited to her part, consisting of armlets, bracelets, necklet, and, festooned round her hips, cords carrying rows of little grelot bells. The mass of her hair seems to be tied with a light-coloured band, and it is probable that she bore as cognizance a snake

[1] See *Ancient Khotan*, pp. 251–3.

[2] See *Ancient Khotan*, p. 354.

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crest, now lost in the general obscurity of that part of the picture. Standing at her right side is a small nude male figure, seeming with outstretched arms and uplifted foot to be trying to climb up her hip and to be impatiently pleading for her assistance towards his ambition. From the rectangular stone-edged tank or lake with its graceful lotus flowers issues a canal or river similarly bordered; and along the near bank can be seen two or more dappled horses trotting towards the left. Above the saddle of the right-most horse appear the head and shoulders of a man. Whether he is in the stream, as Stein believed, or sitting on the horse is not clear, although the saddle seems to be empty. Farther to the left is the upper part of a duck, and beyond, in the same direction near another dappled horse or riding it, is another man. Whether it is the repetition of the same person and horse illustrating successive incidents in a legend is a problem at present unsolved.

Stein considered that there was evidence in the picture itself and in certain surviving traces of local tradition, indicating the probability of its illustrating a legend current at the time of the visit of the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim Hsüan-tsang in the 7th century A.D. As recorded by Hsüan-tsang the story tells of the sacrifice of a great officer of state in the interests of the people's welfare. A local stream, upon which irrigation depended, having ceased to flow the king asked advice of an Arhat (Buddhist priest) as to the cause and remedy of the trouble. The Arhat recommended propitiation of the 'dragon' (Nāga) dwelling in the stream by sacrifice. This being done, a woman emerged from the water and explained that the flow of the stream had failed owing to the death of her husband—the Nāga. She, the Nāginī, said that matters would be righted if she were given a minister of noble birth in marriage. Whereupon a great officer of state offered himself as the sacrifice on condition that the king should found a convent. This was agreed to, and the minister, mounted on a steed, entered the water and disappeared. The stream resumed its flow and, shortly after, the horse reappeared bearing on his back a great drum of sandalwood within which was a letter to the king asking that the drum might be hung to the south-east of the city where it would sound an alarm at the approach of an enemy. Neither Stein nor I could find the drum in the picture but it may have become obscured in the general deterioration of the surface. If the picture is a record of the legend the little man beside the Nāginī would represent the minister of noble birth, his size being appropriate to his relative importance.

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Seated on the farther bank of the stream are two Buddhist monks who seem to have no connexion with the legend and to be serenely unconscious of the Nāginī's presence and of the momentous proceedings in progress. One, with high forehead, downcast eyes, and benign expression, raises his right hand; two fingers erect, as though teaching and holds in his left hand a *pothī*. The other, whose face is obliterated, holds some indistinguishable object in his upraised right hand and rests his left on his thigh. Behind him are traces of a halo. In front, from below the monks, emerges the head of a fish holding a curious tab in his mouth and wearing a chaplet of pearls round his head.[1]

Near the left shoulder of the Nāginī is painted a seated Buddha in contemplation, against a lotus-petal vesica; probably one of a number of such figures now obliterated, and seeming to have no relation to the rest of the picture.

The quality of the drawing is, in general, good, especially that of the seated monks (or Bodhisattvas) and the horse. Hands are delicately and gracefully posed and the recurved finger-tips are a slightly emphasized rendering of a form often found on the hands of Indians of gentle occupation.

The colouring is briefly described by Stein as follows: Head-dress of the Nāginī, red; the body 'true flesh colour'. Lotus flowers range from dark blue to purple. The robe of the right hand monk, dark blue; that of the other monk, shades of brown. General background, bright red-brown. The scales of armour on the Lokapāla are in successive rows of plates, alternately red–blue and red–green.

[1] An example of a fish with a chaplet of pearls occurs in the painted decoration on the side of a small round wooden box recovered from a grave at Astāna. See Ast. vi. 4.025, Stein: *Innermost Asia*, vol. II, p. 702 and vol. III, pl. XCIV.

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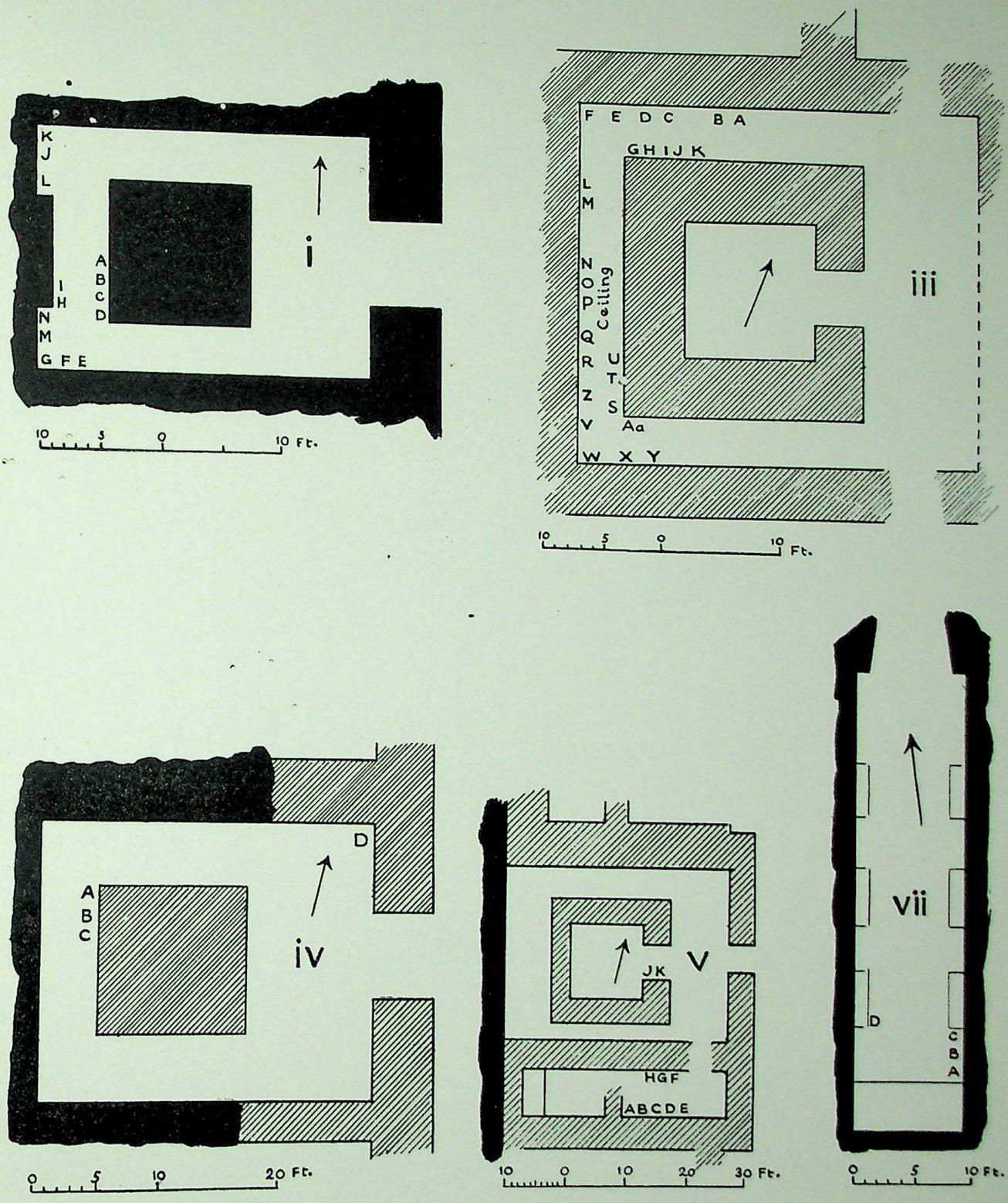

PLANS OF BEZEKLIK SHRINES i, iii, iv, v, vii

The original positions of paintings are indicated by letters

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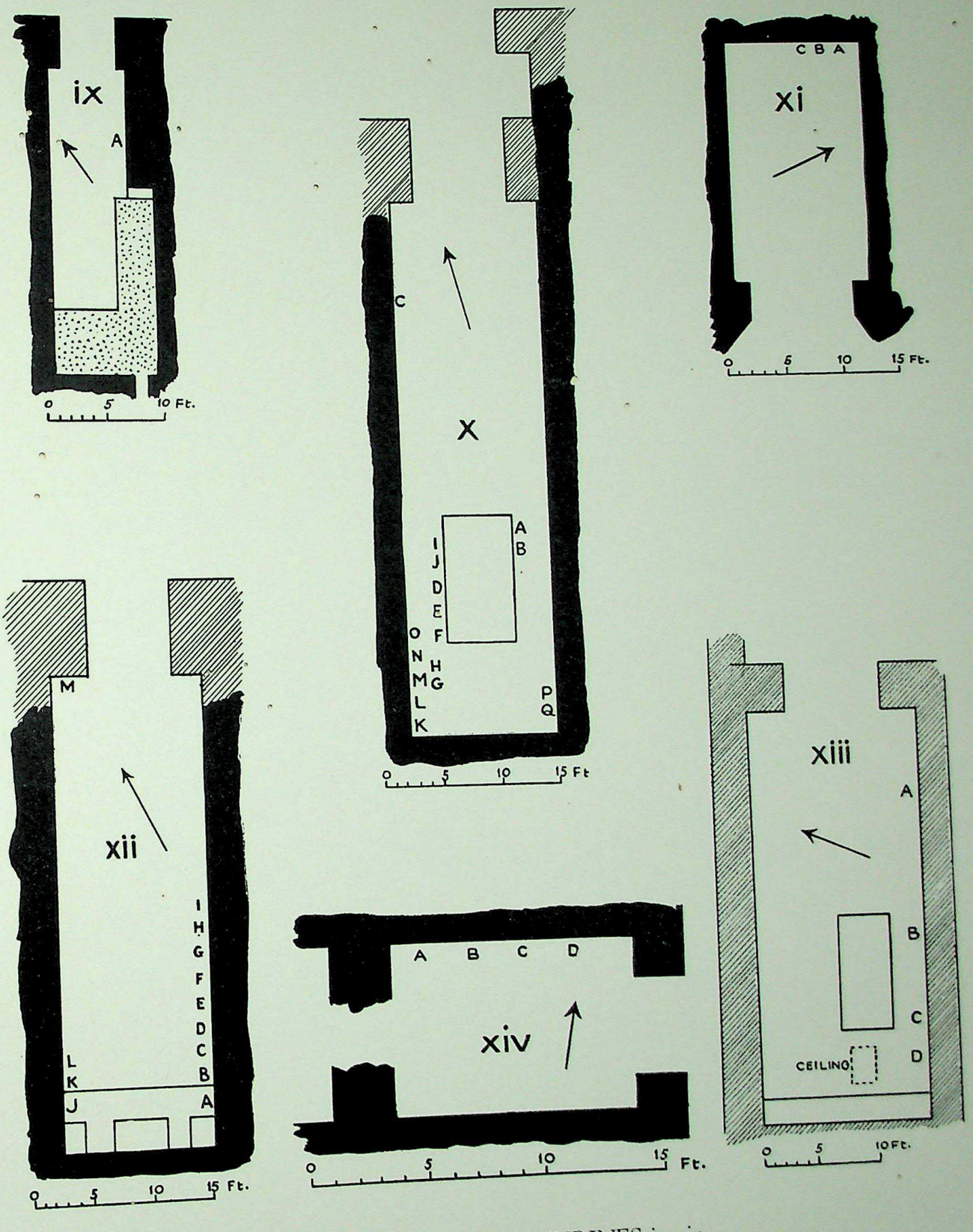

PLANS OF BEZEKLIK SHRINES ix–xiv

The original positions of paintings are indicated by letters

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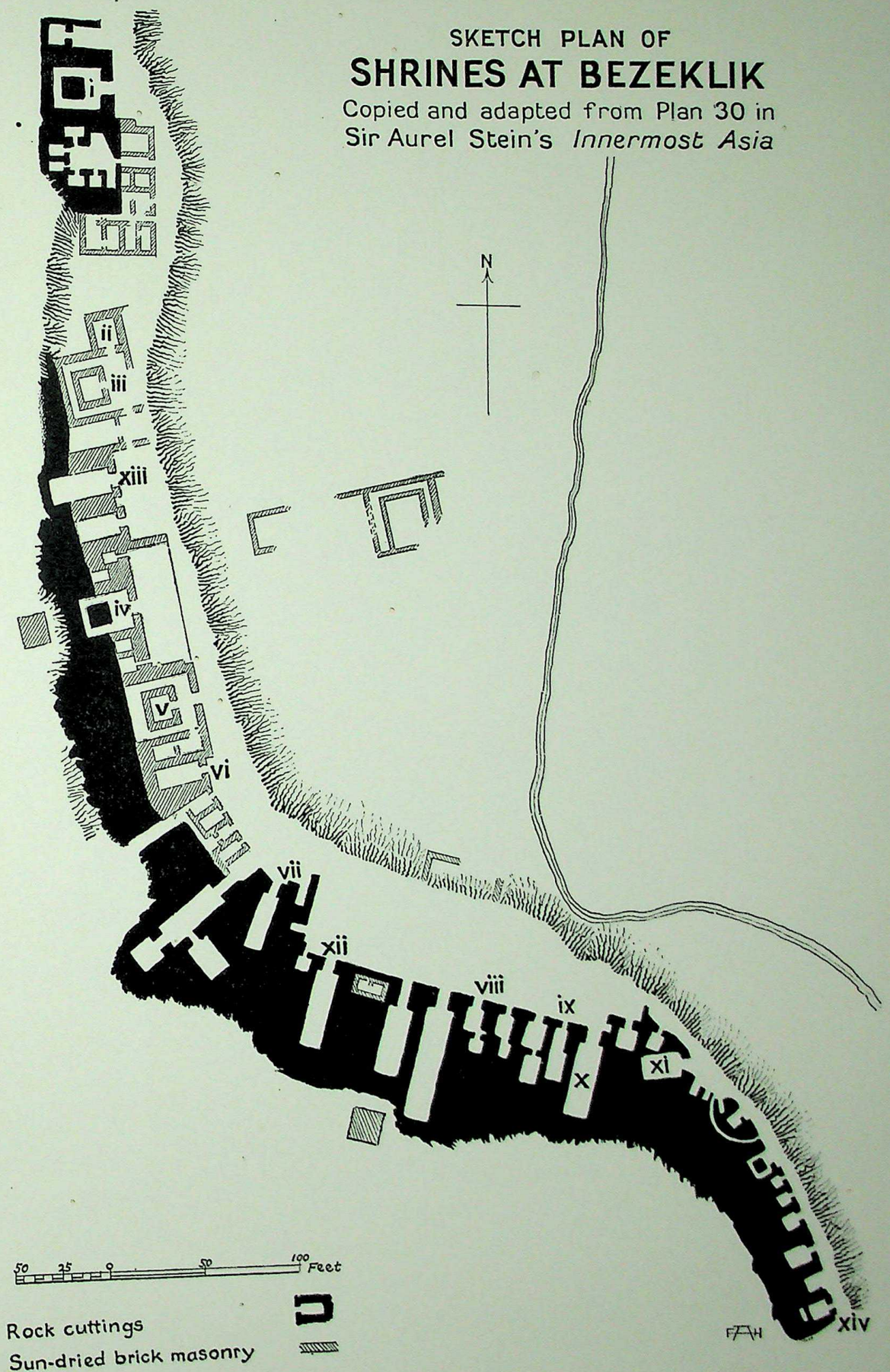
SKETCH PLAN OF
SHRINES AT BEZEKLIK

Copied and adapted from Plan 30 in
Sir Aurel Stein's *Innermost Asia*



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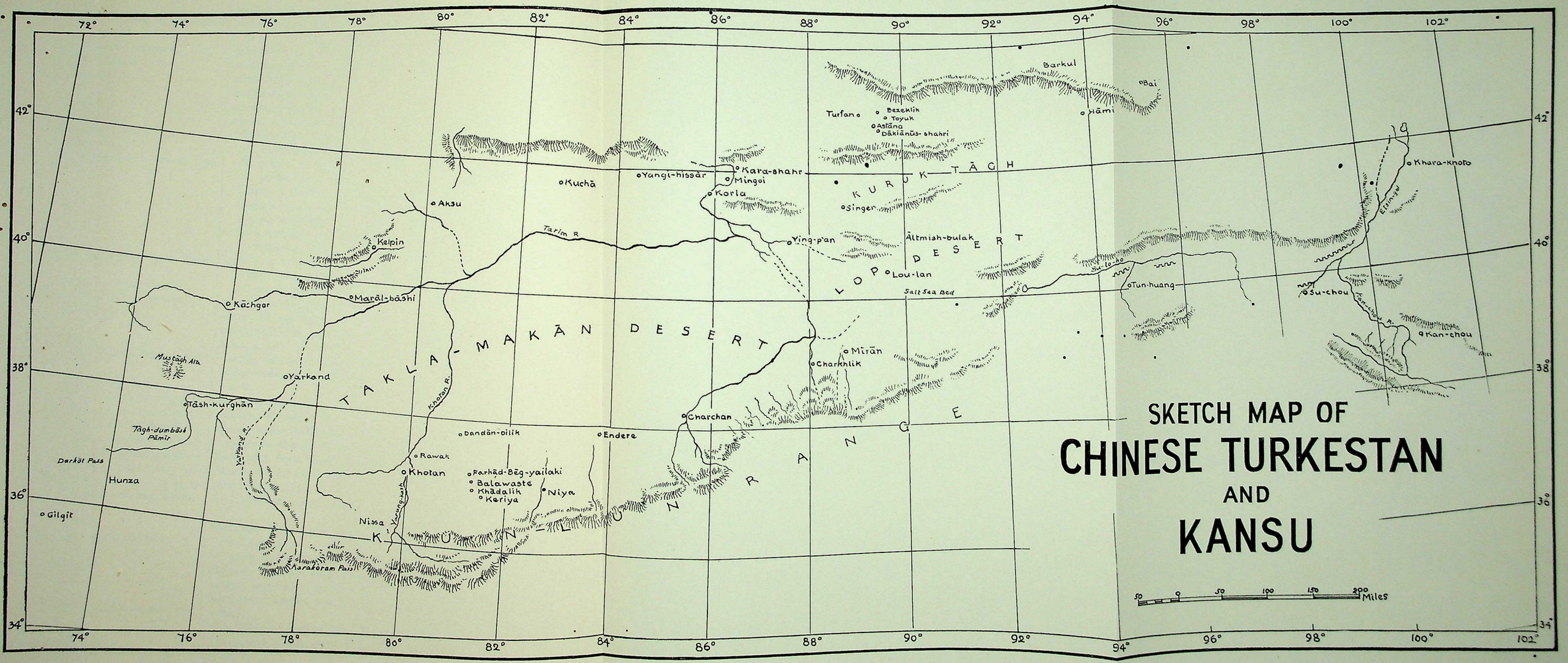

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